



LETTERS

\$1.00

—ON—

EARLY EDUCATION

ADDRESSED TO J. P. GREAVES, ESQ.

—BY—

PESTALOZZI

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN MANUSCRIPT



SYRACUSE, N. Y.

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER

1898

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DEDICATED TO MOTHERS

“Then why resign into a stranger’s hand
A task so much within your own command
That God and Nature, and your feelings too,
Seem with one voice to delegate to YOU?”

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The German originals of these letters have never been published, and they are probably no longer in existence.

In Seyffarth's edition of Pestalozzi's complete works, Blandenburg, 1872, this book under its English title is mentioned in the supplementary bibliography on page 395 of Vol. 16. The edition is given as of London, 1851. In Mann's edition, Langensalza, 1883, I find no reference whatever to this book. In the collective edition of Pestalozzi's works published from 1819 to 1823, there is no mention of these letters. The 9th volume, published in 1822, contains miscellaneous writings with other letters, but no reference to these.

Biber in his *Life of Pestalozzi* (1831) remarks, page 467:

“ His letter on religious education, from which the above abstract is taken, closes the work ‘*How Gertrude Teaches Her little Ones*’, and that work itself closes the series of Pestalozzi's writings so far as they come within the plan of the present volume. The few publications connected with our subject which appeared subsequently under Pestalozzi's name are as we have already hinted the productions of his school rather

than those of his own mind, and have therefore no claim to our notice on the present occasion except inasmuch as they might tend to throw light upon the practical part of the latter."

Christoffel's "Pestalozzi's Leben und Ansichten", Zurich, 1846, makes no reference either to Greaves or to this book.

Von Raumer's "Life and System of Pestalozzi", translated by A. Tilleard, London, 1835, makes this statement on page 66:

"An Englishman of the name of Greaves visited Yverdun in 1819; he offered to teach these poor Swiss children English without remuneration, and his offer was accepted. On this step Pestalozzi himself remarks, 'This created an impression which, considering the original destination of these children, led us very far astray.'"

Ebenezer Cooke in his introduction to the English translation of "How Gertrude Teaches Her Children" (Syracuse, 1894), quotes (p. xxviii) from Vulliemin's "Reminiscences":

"Clendy fell. There was a man there who had taken part in the short-lived enterprise, a man of Christian spirit and enlightened understanding. This man, who was an Englishman, by name Greaves, carried the ideas he had gathered at Clendy back to England, where they took root, and became the origin of infant schools.

From England these schools returned to us, first to Geneva, then to Nyon, then everywhere. We had not understood Pestalozzi, but when his methods came back from England, though they had lost something of their original spirit, their meaning and application were clear."

In De Guimps's "Pestalozzi, his Aim and Work" (Syracuse, 1889), Appendix B (pp. 300-302) is devoted to this book. It begins thus: "Mr. G. Greaves visited Clendy and took great interest in the work there. On his return to England he corresponded with Pestalozzi (between 1818 and 1820), and the letters have been published in English. They are now out of print. They deal with the subject of Infant Education and the direction of Mothers in the training of their children." A synopsis of the book by chapters follows.

This translation is therefore the only authority we have for these letters. The present volume is a reprint from the London edition of 1827. The headlines and table of contents are added. As a whole it is more perspicuous than most of the translations of Pestalozzi's difficult German. As it is the last, so it is in some respects the fullest exposition of Pestalozzi's views; and its value is especially great now when so much effort is making to enlist the co-operation of mothers in the early education of children.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., *April 8, 1898*

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ADVERTISEMENT

When the Translator at the request of his much-respected friend to whom the following Letters are addressed undertook to revise the manuscript with view to its publication, he was fortunate enough to obtain from Pestalozzi permission to make any alterations that might become necessary from the circumstances under which the letters had originally been written.

Of this privilege the Translator has availed himself freely—but not more so than he considered himself authorized by the state in which he found the manuscript, and his familiarity with Pestalozzi's views which the study of his works and the recollection of the days spent in his society have tended to produce. However, as he who might have sanctioned the execution, as he had encouraged the design, is now no more, the Translator has the satisfaction to state that the following sheets previously to their publication have been submitted to the eye of some of the warmest as well as most enlightened friends of Pestalozzi.

And here the Translator might address himself to the indulgence of his readers, and call their attention

to the difficulties which as a foreigner he must necessarily have had to encounter in writing in a language not his own; but he prefers an appeal to their sense of justice, and earnestly solicits, whenever the sentiment may be wanting in perspicuity or the expression in correctness,—whenever, from an attempt at distinctness the impressive eloquence of the original may have been “sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought,”—that these blemishes may be visited *solely* on him, the Translator, and that the candid readers may be guided by those passages which come home to their bosoms with the genuine force of truth, and by those only, in forming an idea of the views of the truly venerable author.

LONDON, *Aug. 21, 1827*

LETTERS

LETTER I

YVERDUN, OCTOBER, 1, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

You require of me to point out to you, in a series of letters, my views concerning the development of the infant mind.

I am happy to see that you acknowledge the importance of education in the earliest stage of life: a fact that has almost universally been overlooked. The philanthropic efforts, both of a former age, and of our own, have been directed in general to the improvement of schools, and their various modes of instruction. It will not be expected that I should say anything tending to depreciate such endeavors: the greater part of my life has been devoted to the arduous aim at their combination; and the results and acknowledgments I have obtained, are such as to convince me that my labor has not been in vain. But I can assure you, my dear friend, from the experience of more than half a century, and from the most intimate conviction of my heart, founded upon this experience, that I should

not consider our task as being half accomplished, I should not anticipate half the consequences for the real benefit of mankind, as long as our system of improvement failed of extending to the earliest stage of education: and to succeed in this, we require the most powerful ally of our cause, as far as human power may contribute to an end which eternal love and wisdom have assigned to the endeavours of man. It is on this altar that we shall lay down the sacrifice of all our efforts; and if our gift is to be accepted, it must be conveyed through the medium of *maternal love*.

Yes! my dear friend, this object of our ardent desires will never be attained but through the assistance of *the mothers*. To them we must appeal; with them we must pray for the blessing of heaven; in them try to awaken a deep sense of all the consequences of all the self-denials, and of all the rewards attached to their interesting duties. Let each take an active part in that most important sphere of influence. Such is the aspiration of an aged man, who is anxious to secure whatever good he may have been allowed to promote or to conceive. Your heart will unite with his: I feel it will. I shake hands with you, as with one who fervently embraces this cause—not my cause, nor that of any other mortal,—but the cause of Him who would have the children of His creation, and of His providence, led to Himself in the ways of love.

Happy should I be, if I might one day speak through your voice to the *mothers of Great Britain*. How does my glowing heart expand at the opening prospect which has this moment filled my imagination! To behold a great and mighty nation known of old to appreciate with equal skill the glory of powerful enterprise, and the silent joys of domestic life, intent upon the welfare of the rising generation; establishing the honor and happiness of those who shall one day stand in their place; securing to their country her glory and her liberty, by a moral elevation of her children! And *shall not the heart of a mother bound in the consciousness that she too is to have her share in this immortal work?*

LETTER II

OCTOBER 3, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Our great object is the development of the infant mind,—and our great means, the agency of mothers.

A most important question then presents itself at the very outset of our inquiries. Has the mother the qualifications requisite for the duties and exercises we would impose on her?

I feel myself bound to enter into this question, and to give it, if possible, an answer fully decisive, requesting your attention to the subject, as I feel persuaded that if my views concede with your own, you will agree with the reasoning founded on my statement.

Yes! I would say, the mother is qualified, and qualified by her Creator himself, to become the principal agent in the development of her child. The most ardent desire for its good is already implanted in her heart; and what power can be more influential, more stimulative, than *maternal love*?—the most gentle, and, at the same time, the most intrepid power in the whole system of nature. Yes: the mother is qualified, for

Providence has also gifted her with the faculties required for her task. And here I feel it necessary to explain what is the task I refer to as peculiarly hers. It is not anything beyond her reach I would demand,—it is not a certain degree or description of knowledge, usually implied in what is vulgarly called a *finished* education; though, if she happened to possess such knowledge, the day will come for opening her treasury and giving to her children what she may choose: but at the period we speak out, all the knowledge acquired in the most accomplished education would not facilitate her task; for what I would demand of her is only—a thinking love.

Love, of course, I presume to be the first requisite, and that which will always present itself,—only modified, perhaps, under various forms. All I would request of a mother would be, to let her love act as strongly as it may, but to season it, in the exercise, with thought.

And I should indeed entreat a mother, by the very love which she bears to her children, to bestow a moment of calm reflection on the nature of her duties. I do not mean to lead her into an artificial discussion; maternal love might be lost in the maze of philosophical investigation. But there is that in her feelings, which, in a shorter way, by a more direct process, may lead her to truth. To this I would appeal. Let it not be

concealed from her, that her duties are both easy and difficult; but I hope there is no mother who has not found the highest reward in overcoming impediments in such a cause: and the whole of her duties will gradually open before her, if she will but dwell upon that simple, yet awful and elevating idea, “ My children are born for eternity, and confided expressly to me, that I may educate them for being children of God.”

“ Mother!” I would say to her, “ responsible mother! look around thee! what diversity of pursuits, what variety of calling! some agitated in the turmoil of a restless life; others courting repose in the bosom of retirement. Of all the different actors that surround thee, whose vocation appears most sacred, most solemn, most holy? ‘ Doubtless his,’ thou art ready to exclaim, ‘ whose life is dedicated to the spiritual elevation of human nature. How happy must he be, whose calling it is to lead others to happiness, and happiness everlasting.’ Well! happy mother! his calling is thine. Shrink not at the idea,—tremble not at the comparison. Think not I arrogate for thee a station beyond thy deserts,—fear not lest temptations to vanity lie hid in my suggestion,—but raise thy heart in gratitude to Him who has entrusted thee with so high a province,—try to render thyself worthy of the confidence reposed in thee. Talk not of deficiencies in thy knowledge,—

love shall supply them;—of limitations in thy means,—
Providence shall enlarge them;—of weakness in thy
energies;—the Spirit of Power himself shall strengthen
them:—look to that Spirit for all that thou dost want,
and especially for those two grand, pre-eminent requi-
sites, *courage* and *humility*.”

LETTER III

OCTOBER 7, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Every mother who is aware of the importance of her task, will, I presume, be ready to devote to it all her zeal. She will think it indispensable to attain a clear view of the end for which she is to educate her children.

I have pointed out this end in my last letter. But much remains to be said on the means to be employed in the first stage of education.

A child is a being endowed with all the faculties of human nature, but none of them developed: *a bud not yet opened*. When the bud uncloses, every one of the leaves unfolds, not one remains behind. Such must be the process of education.

No faculty in human nature but must be treated with the same attention; for their co-agency alone can ensure their success.

But how shall the mother learn to distinguish and to direct each faculty, before it appears in a state of development sufficient to give a token of its own existence?

Not indeed from books, but from actual observation.

I would ask every mother who has observed her child with no other end but merely to watch over its safety, whether she has not remarked, even in the first era of life, the progressive advancement of the faculties?

The first exertions of the child, attended with some pain, have yet enough of pleasure to induce a repetition gradually increasing in frequency and power; and when their first efforts, blind efforts as it were, are once over, the little hand begins to play its more perfect part. From the first movement of this hand, from the first grasp which avails itself of a plaything, how infinite is the series of actions of which it will be the instrument! not only employing itself in everything connected with the habits and comforts of life, but astonishing the world, perhaps, with some masterpiece of art, or seizing ere they escape the fleeting inspirations of genius and handing them down to the admiration of posterity.

The first exertion of this little hand then opens an immense field to a faculty which now begins to manifest itself.

In the next place the attention of the child is now visibly excited and fixed by a great variety of external impressions: the eye and the ear are attracted wherever a lively color, or a rousing animating sound, may strike them, and they turn, as if to inquire the

cause of that sudden impression. Very soon the features of the child, and its redoubled attention, will betray the pleasure with which the senses are affected by the brilliant colors of a flower, or the pleasing sounds of music. Apparently the first traces are now making of that mental activity which will hereafter employ itself in the numberless observations and combinations of events, or in the search of their hidden causes, and which will be accessible to all the pleasing or painful sensations which life in its various shapes may excite.

Every mother will recollect the delight of her feelings on the first tokens of her infant's consciousness and rationality; indeed maternal love knows not a higher joy than that arising from those interesting indications. Trifling to another, to her they are of infinite value. To her they reveal an eventful futurity; they tell her the important story, that a spiritual being, dearer to her than life, is opening as it were the eye of intelligence and saying in its silent, but tender and expressive language, "I am born for immortality."

But the last and highest joy, the triumph of maternal love, remains yet to be spoken of. It is the look of the child to the eye of the mother—that look so full of love, so full of *heart*, which speaks most emphatically of its elevation in the scale of being. It is now a subject for the best gift bestowed on human nature. The voice of conscience will speak within its breast;

religion will assist its trembling steps and raise its eye to Heaven. With these convictions the heart of the mother expands with delight and solicitude: she again hails in her offspring not merely the citizen of earth: "Thou art born," she cries, "for immortality and an immortality of happiness: such is the promise of thy heaven-derived faculties; such shall be the consummation of thy Heavenly Father's love."

These then are the first traces of human nature unfolding in the infantine state. The philosopher may take them as facts constituting an object of study: he may use them as the basis of a system; but they are originally designed for the mother,—they are a hint from above, intended at once as her blessing and encouragement:

"For all her sorrows, all her cares,
An over-payment of delight!"

LETTER IV

OCTOBER 18, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

When a mother has observed in her child the first traces of development, new questions suggests themselves:—*How shall these expanding faculties be directed?* Which of them call for the most diligent attention, and which may follow their natural course without requiring any peculiar care bestowed on their growth and regulation? Which, too, have the most important bearing on the future welfare of the child?

The last question, I suppose, will be decided unani- mously in favor of the heart. I cannot suppose that any mother is so morally and intellectually blind as consciously to decide on providing for the external and temporal benefit of her child at the expense of his inward and eternal well-being. But she may never- theless be puzzled as to the relative importance of the faculties under her charge, and the consequent propor- tion of attention they separately demand.

The heart has, indeed, a pre-eminent claim on her attention. But is not the child directed and admon-

ished by the voice of conscience within? Is he not able to decide the great question of right and wrong, merely by listening to this voice, without any particular instruction from another? And will not the time arrive when he becomes receptive of the truths of Religion, to confirm that voice within, and to give him that moral elevation, the very idea of which is at present so far beyond his reach?

It would not be difficult to answer these questions, and to put the whole subject in its true light. But I would not offer to a mother any detailed plan for her guidance, considering it as highly essential that she should feel herself untrammelled by anything like system, the principles of which, not being her own, might only prejudice and confine her opinions and practice, without convincing her of any fitness or adaptation in the given means to the end proposed. Why should her mind be merely the reflection of another's, whose views, perhaps, she can neither fathom nor appreciate? Is she not a mother? and has her Creator, in furnishing her with the springs of natural life for His children, left her unqualified for administering to that spiritual life which is the very end and essence of all being? Is her relation to humanity of so responsible a character, and shall not her intelligence and energy be concentrated in this one focus? Shall not her whole existence be absorbed in the exalted purpose,

the unwearying effort, to accomplish the end of her creation? Nature, benevolence, religion, all demand it! and so unanimously, as to set the question for ever at rest.

I would entreat of every mother to take a general survey of life in all its varieties of aspect; and wherever happiness presents itself, not merely in semblance but in substance, then to pause and examine, if possible, how that happiness is constituted, and whence it originates.

It is more than probable, that she will feel rather dissatisfied with the results of her first investigation; she will find it almost impossible, amidst such distracting multiplicity of pursuits and of characters, to select any specimens on which her eye might repose as it were from the scrutinizing search, and gather light truly illustrative of the subject. She would fain withdraw her contemplations from this scene of confusion, and direct them again into their former channel, to dwell with unmingled delight on that being so dear to her affections.

But the dearer your child is to you, fond mother! the more urgently would I insist on your examining that life into which he will one day be thrown. Do you find it replete with danger? You must encompass him with a shield that shall preserve his innocence. Do you find it a maze of error? You must show him

that magic clue which shall lead to the fountain of truth. Do you find it lifeless, and dead, under all its busy superficialities? You must try to nourish in him that spirit of activity which shall keep his powers alive, and impel him forwards to improve, though all around him should be lost in the habitual mechanism of a stationary idleness. Again, therefore, enquire what may be the experience life can afford you? Look for a moment at those who have distinguished themselves from the rest of their species. Surely you would not wish your child to be one of the many of whom nothing can be said but that they lived and died, passing through life ingloriously, and uncharacterized by any quality, or any action than can dignify humanity. Your child can be in no class of society where the most honorable distinction is not attainable. The fertile spreading tree, however low may be the valley it grows in, is not the less welcome to the way-worn traveller who hails its luscious fruits and grateful shades.

Even among the inferior stations, you will find many who have really distinguished themselves by the industry and energy displayed in their employment, however little may be its intrinsic dignity; but their skill and perseverance have gained and secured to them the attention and perhaps respect of their neighbors and superiors.

Others will arrest your observation, placed in the more exalted ranks of society, whose amazing grasp of intelligence will appear to you as almost supernatural. You may occasionally remark it compassing extraordinary ends, with ordinary and even limited means; directing with facility the helm of national power, or over-ruling the decisions of national wisdom, or stemming the currents of national policy; and in these, or any other varieties of its character and action, you will have to admire the triumphs of mind.

These prominent actors on the stage of life are to a great number, whose destiny seems to be in their power, objects of terror: but you will scarcely find any one disposed to withhold the tribute of admiration due to their lofty endowments. As their persons are regarded with *respect*, or possibly with *fear*, by others of their kind, so you will meet with many an individual who inspires his observers and acquaintances with no other sentiment than love: his natural goodness of disposition, and his unvarying kindness of attention, will never fail of producing this appropriate effect: being every man's well-wisher, he has gained the secret of access to every man's affections.

Your own acquaintance will furnish you with the original of at least one individual in each of these three classes.

Are they all happy, or any one superlatively so?

LETTER V

OCTOBER 24, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I do not mean to anticipate the answer of the mother. But it is highly probable that her inquiries will terminate in sad conviction that none of the individuals in question seem to be invested with that happiness, true, essential, and undisturbed, which she so ardently aspires after as the future portion of her child.

Here, then, she will sigh over the imperfections of human nature, the inconsistencies of human pursuits. Is it possible, she will exclaim, that with all this fertility of genius, all this comprehension of mind, all these charities of heart, happiness should still be unattained?

Now this is precisely the point to which I would bring her.

“*How is it possible?*” is a phrase so common with us, that we quite forget its original meaning. It is a question, but we never fail to evade its legitimate answer. It is a question to ourselves, but we consciously shrink back from the task of meeting it with a fair and open reply. Let it be otherwise in the present in-

stance. Let the mother go on to examine the nature of this possibility, and she will soon be sensible of her approximation to the truth she is in search of. She must be aware that mere executive talent, however splendid; mere mental capacity, however vast; mere good nature, however diffusive, are still endowments infinitely inferior to the conditions of human happiness. And here I am about to allude to a fundamental error which prevails in education, as well as in our judgment of men and things.

What, I would ask, can be the true, intrinsic use of the utmost possible exertions unless regulated by accuracy of ideas, elevated and universal perceptions, and, above all, under the control of and founded on the noblest sentiments of the heart, a firm and steady will? And again, I ask, what can be the real use and merit of schemes however deep or ingenious, if the energy of exertion be not equal to the boldness and skill of the conception, or even if the two powers are combined but are not working for an end worthy of themselves and propitious to humanity? It is obvious then, that a mere cultivation of the talents of our animal and intellectual nature will be found absolutely inefficient as a substitute for the heart.

This, then, will appear to be the true basis of human happiness. But I must even here warn you against a possible mistake, by pointing out the features of a

character likely to mislead you, and which is so often met with in our passage through life that none of us shall dispute the existence of an original. I refer to one whose mind is pregnant with good intentions, his heart overflowing with amiable dispositions, and his zeal ever ready to patronize and promote any worthy enterprize that has for its object the benefit of society. I need not name to you all the admirable points of such a character; so much kindness, benevolence, and warmth, cannot fail of seeming to you irresistibly attractive. And yet it is a fact, but too often confirmed by experience, that all this constellation of excellencies may glow and sparkle in vain; that such a temperament, however finely constituted, may yet live and move to little purpose in reference to others, and to itself fail of securing that happiness which is asserted to be the inseparable concomitant of virtue.

The reason is evident: the heart, the grand wheel in the human mechanism, may have been long and actively at work, but for want of being connected in due time with those other powers of human nature whose cooperation is equally essential it has failed of producing that health and vitality which would otherwise have pervaded the system. The faculties of man must be so cultivated that no one shall predominate at the expence of another but each be excited to the true standard of activity; *and this standard is the spiritual nature of man.*

And here allow me to expatiate again on the principal results of these important truths; again to touch upon them in order to the character I am addressing.

“Happy mother! thou art delighting thyself in the first efforts of thy child and they are delightful; muse upon them; pass them not by,—they are the gems of future action; they are all-important to thee and to him, and should furnish thee with many a long train of prolific thought.

“God has given to thy child all the faculties of our nature but the grand point remains yet undecided! How shall this heart, this head, these hands, be employed? to whose service shall they be dedicated? A query, the answer to which involves a futurity of happiness or unhappiness to the life so dear to thee.

“God has given thy child a spiritual nature; that is to say, He has implanted in him the voice of conscience: and He has done more,—He has given him the faculty of attending to this voice. He has given him an eye whose natural turn is heavenward; teaching thee, in this alone, the elevation of his destiny; and disclaiming for him all affinity to the inferior creatures whose downward looks speak as expressively of the earth whither they are tending.

“Thy child, then, was created, not for earth, but for heaven. Dost thou know the way that leads thither? Thy child would never find it, nor would any

other mortal be able to lead the way, if divine mercy did not reveal it to him. But it is not enough to know this way; thy child must learn to walk in it.

“ It is recorded, thou knowest, that God opened the heavens to one of the patriarchs of old, and showed him a ladder leading to their azure heights! Well, this ladder is let down to every descendant of Abram; it is tendered to thy child. But he must be taught to climb it. And let him take heed not to attempt it nor think to scale it by cold calculations of the head,—nor be compelled to adventure it by the mere impulse of the heart:—but let all these powers combine, and the noble enterprise will be crowned with success.

“ All these powers are already bestowed on him: but thine is the province to assist in calling them forth. Let the ladder leading to heaven be constantly before thine eyes, even the ladder of *Faith*, on which thou mayest behold ascending and descending the angels of *Hope* and *Love*.”

LETTER VI

OCTOBER 31, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Had I been more anxious, on some former occasions, to suit my words to the taste of the one, and to the theories of others, I might perhaps have secured the approbation of those who are at present inclined to put upon my principles a less favorable construction, or to reject them altogether. But I have not been taught to refer to systems for the proof of what experience suggested or practice confirmed to me. If it has been my lot, as I humbly hope that it has been, to light upon truths little noticed before, and principles which, though almost generally acknowledged, were yet seldom practised, I confess that I was little qualified for that task by the precision of my philosophical notions, but supported rather by a rich stock of experience, and guided by the impulse of my heart. If, therefore, I am frequently recurring to an appeal to the feelings of a mother, you will easily conceive that, while I would court the examination of my principles by those who are qualified for it by intellectual superi-

ority, I would yet look for sympathy chiefly to those whose exertions are kindred to mine,—being sprung from the same feelings, and directed to the same end.

Let me then proceed to lay before you my views, not indeed with the elaborate accuracy that might satisfy the criticism of a stranger, but with the warmth that may speak to the *heart* of a *friend*.

I would, in the first place, direct your attention to the existence and the early manifestation of a spiritual principle, even in the infant mind. I would put it in the strongest light, that there is in the child an active power of faith and love: the two principles by which, under the divine guidance, our nature is made to participate in the highest blessings that are in store for us. And this power is not in the infant mind, as other faculties are, in a dormant state. While all other faculties, whether mental or physical, present the image of utter helplessness, of a weakness which in its first attempts at exertion only leads to pain and disappointment, that same power of faith and love displays an energy, an intensity, which is never surpassed by its most successful efforts when in full growth.

I am fully aware that what I have called just now a principle of faith and love in the infant is frequently, and indeed generally, degraded by the name of a merely animal or instinctive feeling. But I confess that I look upon the instinctive agency of the infant,

in its first stage of existence, as the wonderful dispensation of a benign and all-wise Providence. In this wise, and, I repeat it, wonderful dispensation, we may indeed admire, with feelings of veneration, the free gift of the Creator to man—a gift which, however man may pervert it, is yet, in its primitive agency, an incalculable blessing. And if the feeling I am alluding to, be called animal, I confess that such appears to have been the intention of the Creator, that however low the first state of human existence might rank, it might yet adumbrate, in its primitive forms, the successive development of its spiritual nature.

This principle, however, for the existence of which I contend, is by no means absolutely ripened and purified in the child. If it were to remain among the inferior faculties it would fail of acting as a constant preservative of faith and love. It must, therefore, derive its nourishment and increase from nature; it must be cherished by the sacred power of innocence and truth. This must constitute the atmosphere in which the child is living.

This daily nourishment of the child's love and faith will in time unfold all the germs of the purest virtues. The infant is obedient, active, patient,—I should almost have said, wise and pious, before it has been taught to understand the nature or merit of these

virtues. The highest and strongest power of spiritual elevation of which the soul of man is capable under the influence of the divine doctrine of Christ, is communicated to the child in tender infancy, by a kind of revelation. It has a foretaste of the most sublime virtues, the power of which it is not yet able to conceive.

Thus the true dignity of Christianity may be said to be implanted in the child before it has an idea of the full growth of its yet tender germs in its breast. The sacred feeling of gratitude is active in the child in the moment of gratification, when it feels its animal life appeased and its animal wants supplied. The sacred power of sympathy, which is superior to the fear of danger and death, is active in the child: it would die in the arms of the mother, to relieve her from imminent pain, the feeling of which is strongly marked on her features,—it would die for her, before it could conceive what is sympathy, or death. In the child there is even an antepast of the feeling of tranquillity and delight which is the reward of a resignation of our own desires, of a subordination of all our hopes and wishes, under the supreme and ruling principles of love and faith.

This act of resignation, trifling as may be its immediate object, is the first step towards the conscious and principled exercise of self-denial.

On the arms of the mother, the infant is actuated and as it were inspired by this principle, which may become its second nature while the mind is yet far from a consciousness of that power which, in its further development, may produce the most glorious efforts of self-denial.

LETTER VII

NOVEMBER 8, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I have in my last letter stated it is my firm conviction that there is in the infant a principle which may, under the divine guidance, enable him not only to stand distinguished among his fellow-men, but also to fulfil the highest command of his Maker, to walk in the light of faith, and to have his heart overflowing with that love which “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things,”—the love which “never faileth.”

I have called this principle, even as it is manifested in the earliest stage of human life, a principle of love and faith. I am aware that these terms will meet with contradiction by some, and perhaps with derision by others. I should feel truly obliged to anyone who would give me two other terms more appropriate,—more expressive of the idea that I have formed on the subject, after the closest and most earnest observation of many years. In the mean time, may I venture at least to hope that no one will deny the fact, merely on account of the insufficiency of the terms which I may have had the misfortune to apply to the description of it.

I shall try to explain my idea in a manner which will scarcely leave a doubt on the nature of the fact to which it is my wish to call the attention of all persons engaged in education. They will be ready to admit, from past experience, that if you treat a child with kindness, there is a greater chance of succeeding than if you try by any other means.

Now this is all that I would wish to have granted to me; and on this simple and undeniable fact I would ground whatever there is of theory, or of principle, in my views on infant development.

If you succeed by *kindness*, more than by any other means, there must, I would say, be a something in the child that answers as it were to your call of kindness. Kindness must be the most congenial to his nature: kindness must excite a sympathy in his heart. Whence is that something derived? I have no hesitation in saying, from the Giver of all that is good. It is indeed to that same principle in man that He has always addressed His call, both by the voice of conscience, and whenever He has, by His infinite mercy, spoken to mankind, "at sundry times, and in divers manners". And if otherwise, how are we to satisfy ourselves with regard to the meaning of the Divine authority, by which it is said, that "of such is the kingdom of Heaven;" and that, "Whosoever shall not receive the

kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.”

We shall have the more reason to think so, if we consider the manner in which that power of kindness acts upon even the infant mind.

If the infant were not actuated by any other impulse but the mere instinct of self-preservation; if his attachment to the mother were grounded merely upon a consciousness of his helplessness, of his animal wants, and the observation that she was the first to relieve, to protect, to gratify them; if thence sprang his smile, and all the little tokens of affection so dear to the mother's heart; if the infant were really that selfish, calculating creature, turning to the gratification of his own desires the affection of others; then indeed would I cease for ever to speak of the stamina of love in his heart, or of the antepast, however distant, of faith; then would I cease for ever to address the mother as the principal agent in the cause of humanity. Such a cause then could no longer exist. Then I would no longer exhort her to weigh her duty, and to consider the means by which to accomplish it. Any means would do for what would then be her province,—to nurture up in her infant that same cold and unnatural selfishness which might be lurking in her own bosom under the deceitful mask of maternal love.

But let the mother tell what her heart says to such a doctrine. Let her tell if she does not believe that God himself has implanted in her that feeling of maternal love. Let her tell if she does not feel herself nearest to God in those moments in which her love is most intense and active; and if it is not this feeling which alone enables her to be unremitting in her duties, and to undergo self-denials which have no name, which we may attempt to describe, but which none but a mother can feel, and none but a mother can undergo. Let her tell, whether she is not firmly convinced, by that same feeling, that there is, in the heart of her infant, a gratitude, and a confidence, and an attachment, which is better than selfish, which is implanted as is her own love by her Heavenly Father.

I know the cold and heartless doctrine which does not deny the existence of such a feeling, but which accounts for it by calling it a salutary deception, intended to induce the mother to be careful in the fulfilment of her duty. Have I called this doctrine cold and heartless? Then let me add that I do not wish to cast an imputation on those who may hold it, from whatever motives it may be: but I cannot bring myself to sympathize with them.

Let others advocate the theory that evil may be done that good may come of it. Let man try to palliate by this theory his own weakness: but let him not presume

to transfer that principle to the works of Him who is all wisdom, all power, and all love.

No: I will never believe that God, to endear to her by a pleasing delusion her difficult and often painful duty,—I will never believe *that the Father of Truth has implanted a lying spirit in the heart of the mother.*

LETTER VIII

NOVEMBER 15, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I would call upon the mother to be thankful to God that He has so much facilitated her task by implanting in her infant's heart those germs which, under His guidance and with His blessing, it will be her duty to develop, to protect, and to strengthen, until they may be matured into real fruits of faith and love.

For it will be her task in a world of corruption to guard infant innocence, and to mature it into principle. In a world of inconstancy, of distrust, of unbelief, it will be incumbent on her to be assiduous that the serene, the amiable security of that innocence with which it now reposes in her arms, may one day grow into unshaken confidence in all that is good here below, and in all that is sacred above. And in a world of selfishness, hers will be the care to direct and expand the instinctive attachment of her infant into the spring of active benevolence, which in a good cause will shrink from no self-denials, and think no sacrifice too great.

How could she hope to succeed in this, the great end of education, if the Creator had not instructed the child with those faculties which will admit of judicious direction and development? The requisite for education does not consist only in the qualification of those who undertake the task; it consists in the qualification of the child also, in whose nature that must be found which proclaims louder than anything else the great end of Infinite Wisdom in the creation of man. First of all, therefore, let the mother rejoice that whatever may be the weakness of human nature, however great may be the temptations, yet there is in her child a something, the origin of which, as a gift of God, dates prior to temptation or to corruption. Let her rejoice, that in her child there is that, which

———“nor gems, nor stores of gold,
Nor purple state, nor culture, can bestow:
But GOD alone!—when first His active hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.”

But will this doctrine be equally acceptable to all as it is to myself, and as I trust that it will be to you?

I have heard it said, my dear friend, that there are many in my own country, and in yours, who will reject it altogether, because they will say that it is not *orthodox*.

Now I would ask who the men are who think they are privileged to say that their views alone are *orthodox*? that their doctrine alone, to the exclusion of all

others, is the right one? I could wish them to come forward and tell us what are their credentials; credentials, not indeed signed by the hand of men, however wise, for the wisest are liable to error;—however powerful, for the most powerful may be tempted into pride;—but testimonials that will fully bear them out in their assumed character as the exclusive owners, as the sole interpreters of *His* truth who wishes all His children “to take the water of life freely;” and not “hew out cisterns that have no water,” nor to be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.” If they have any such credentials, it is fit that we should know them, and bow to their authority. If not, it is fit, at least, that they should not pretend to what does not belong to them, any more than it does to us,—exclusive authority,—and that they should, in their turn, grant to us what nobody will think of withholding from them—the right of *freedom of conscience and private judgement*.

I do indeed hope, that the time is at length come when it will no longer be asked whether a theory does or does not agree with the interest of one class of men, or with the preconceived opinions of another; but, whether it rests on observation, on experience, on a right use of reason and an unbiased view of revelation; disdaining the comments of men, and acknowledging, as its only basis, the word of God.

Thus I would meet one class of objections. But I anticipate another class of doubts, of a far different nature,—not arising from a disposition in those who hold them to over-rate their own judgment, and consequently to slight that of others; but rather from the consideration of the weakness of all human reasoning, and from an unwillingness to part with views which have been adopted in early youth, and conscientiously preserved as the sacred legacy perhaps of those who are no more; views which have grown upon their esteem, and which are now connected with the best interests of their heart, because they have seen those who held them set an example which no event ever obliterate from their memory, and which no difficulty shall ever discourage them from imitating.

I can easily fancy that upon similar grounds a mother might be inclined not so much to dispute the correctness of the theory, but rather to question the right of giving way to it in opposition to what she has been in the habit of revering as uncontroverted truth. “ Shall she abandon principles held by those who watched with anxiety the first dawn of her own mind, when an infant, and who were unremitting in their exertions to form it, and to direct it to truth? Shall she give up her mind to the examination of theories, and those perhaps the theories of a stranger, rather than follow the wishes of her friends? Is it so neces-

sary to inquire into the existence of facts, instead of being guided by the practice of those whom experience has taught her to respect, and whom her heart prompts her to love? Should it be so difficult to succeed? should not maternal love make up for a deficiency of knowledge? And, if so, God forbid that her principles of education should in any way be connected with views which she has been taught to consider as erroneous, perhaps as dangerous and altogether opposite to divine truth.”

To such doubts, and thus brought forward, I should answer: “Mother! I congratulate you on your doubts, although they tend to alienate you from views which I hold, and which thousands have held before me. But your doubts betray that feeling to which of all others I should wish to see the heart of every mother alive. Do not then turn away on your arduous path from the proffered hand of one who, though he participates not in your reasoning, yet honors your feelings, and would fain assist you, as far as in him lies, in your endeavors. It is probable that I may never know you. My days may be numbered, my glass may be run, long before you may chance to hear that in a far distant land, in a valley between his native Alps, there lived, and lived to old age, a man who knew not a cause of higher interest or of greater importance than that in which you are now engaged; whose life has been

spent in endeavors, weak perhaps, but in which was concentrated all his strength, to assist in their task the mothers and those who may act in their place, and those on whom may develop the duty of guiding the mind at a more advanced period of youth; a man, who wishes that others may take up what he has commenced, and succeed where he may have failed; who trusts that his friends will speak where his voice could not have gained a hearing, and act where his own efforts would have passed unnoticed; a man who firmly believes that there is an invisible tie to unite all those whose hearts have embraced the same sacred cause, and who would hail with delight their appearance, to whatever nation they may belong, to whatever opinions they may be addicted; a man, who, in his dreams, (and, if dreams they were, more pleasing dreams there cannot exist,) has thought of such as you, whose heart is warm, whose piety is genuine, but who differ from him, and perhaps widely, in opinion.

“ And on account of that difference, should there be no communion between us ?

“ Do not think that I have a wish to make you a convert to my opinions. No, never swerve for one moment from the principles which you now follow from motives that reasoning alone may suggest, unless your *heart* concur in it. Let this be the test by which you examine the notions that you may hear from

others; and always act up to the best of your knowledge, as your conscience directs you.

“ Let this be the test by which you examine the ideas now before you. Adopt of them as much as your heart will warrant you. As to the rest of them, you may perhaps be inclined to believe that they have proceeded from conviction as sincere, and from intentions no less benevolent.

“ But you may consider them erroneous.—some of them, perhaps, even mischievous. You may even lament that those should have held them whom you might wish to meet on a ground where you now must secede from them.

“ I, for my own part, rejoice that my creed does not countenance any such apprehension in me with regard to you. For it is my hope, in which I rejoice, that those who have been earnest in their wish and steadfast in their attempts to do good, not indeed relying upon any strength or merit of their own, but acknowledging their own failings, and giving God the glory of their success; it is my hope, that they may, in humbleness of heart, but with the confidence of faith, address themselves, in every situation of their life, and in their expectation for days to come, to Divine Mercy.”

LETTER IX

NOVEMBER 20, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I shall try in this, and in some subsequent letters, to describe the facts which may be considered as the first manifestation of the good principle of which I have spoken. I shall then proceed to point out the common mistake by which it is frequently either altogether overlooked, or even perverted by injudicious treatment, so that, instead of acting as a moral preservative, instead of being instrumental to the spiritual elevation, it is rendered contributive to the corruption of the best powers of human nature.

It will be unpleasant to dwell upon this topic; it will be necessary to allude to the source of all the mental and moral misery which our flesh is heir to; it will be indispensable to convince many a fond mother, that what was well meant is not always well done, and strongly to impress upon her mind the fact that by a mode of proceeding flowing from the most benevolent motives, but which would not have stood the test of a matured judgment, she may entail on her children all that misery against which it was her only wish to protect them.

But if, in going over the ground now before us, we shall have frequent occasion to lament the short-sightedness of some, and the indolence of others, we shall also have occasion to rejoice that the means by which so much misery may be avoided, and by which a still greater portion of happiness may be secured, are by no means out of the reach of the mother. Indeed, whenever I have met with a mother who distinguished herself by the care which she gave to the education of her children, and by the success which she obtained, I have always found that the principles upon which she acted and the means which she employed were not the result of a long and difficult search, but rather of a resolution adopted in time, and constantly followed, to do no step without pausing for a moment to reflect: and I have not found that this led to an over-anxiety on her part, or to that state of continual agitation which we sometimes observe preying on the heart of a mother who is always calculating the remote consequences of trifles with almost feverish apprehension.

This last mentioned state of mind, which must mar the cheerfulness of her spirits so essential for a judicious and effective education, generally ensues upon a prior want of discretion, that may have led to consequences which, in their turn, give rise to needless apprehensions. Nothing, on the contrary, is so well calculated to secure to the mind an imperturbable tranquillity

as a timely exercise of judgment and a constant habit of reflection.

I know not if philosophers would think it worth their while, but I feel confident that a mother would not decline following us to the consideration of the state in which the infant remains for some time after his birth.

This state, in the first place, strikes us as a state of utter helplessness. The first impression seems to be that of pain, or, at least, of a sensation of uneasiness. There is not yet the slightest circumstance that might remind us of any other faculties except those of the animal nature of man; and even these are in the very lowest stage of development.

Still there is in this animal nature an instinct which acts with greater security, and which increases in strength as the functions of animal life are repeated, day by day: this animal instinct has been known to make the most rapid progress, and to arrive very early at the highest point of strength and intensity, even when little or no attention has been paid to protect the infant from surrounding dangers, or to strengthen it by more than ordinary nourishment and care. It is a well-known fact that among savage nations the animal powers of children are capable of exertion and are developing with a rapidity which proves sufficiently that this part of human nature goes altogether parallel

with the instinct in the rest of the animal creation.

So striking is this similarity, that we frequently find every attempt to discover any trace of another faculty treated with ridicule. Indeed while we are assiduous in our attention to that part of human nature in the earliest stage of life which would require but little of our care, we are but too apt to overlook and to neglect that which in its first appearance is certainly very weak, but which is, by its very weakness, entitled to our care and support, and which may well inspire us with an interest in its development that will amply reward us for our labors.

For, striking as this similarity may be, we can never be justified in overlooking the distinction that exists between the infant, even in the first era of life, and the animal, which apparently may have made a more rapid progress, and may be far superior in qualifications which constitute a sound and comfortable state of animal existence.

The animal will for ever remain on that point of bodily strength and sagacity to which its instinct has conducted it so rapidly. For the whole duration of its life, its enjoyments, and exertions, and, if we may say so, its attainments, will remain stationary. It may through old age, or through unfavorable circumstances, be thrown back; but it will never advance beyond that line of physical perfection which is attendant on its

full growth. A new faculty, or an additional agency of the former ones, is an event unheard of in the natural history of the animal creation.

It is not the same with man.

In him there is something which will not fail, in due time, of making itself manifest by a series of facts altogether independent of animal life. While the animal is for ever actuated by that instinct to which it owes its preservation and all its powers and enjoyments, a something will assert its right in man to hold the empire over all his powers; to control the lower part of his nature, and to lead him to those exertions which will secure for him a place in the scale of moral being.

The animal is destined by the Creator to follow the instinct of its nature. Man is destined to follow a higher principle. *His* animal nature must no longer be permitted to rule him, as soon as his spiritual nature has commenced to unfold.

It will be the object of my next letter to point out to the mother the epoch at which she may expect the first tokens of a spiritual nature in her infant.

LETTER X

NOVEMBER 27, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I have frequently heard it observed that there is not a more humiliating consideration than that of the first condition of man, when he has entered this world a helpless stranger, equally unable to speak his wants, or to think of supplying them, or to give any token by which he might be recognized as a member of the rational creation.

I admit that all this must strongly remind us of the weakness of our nature, that it may guard us against the presumption of trusting in our own powers; and I think it right to encourage any reflection which may call back to our mind what we are but too apt to forget. But though this consideration is by no means flattering to our vanity, yet I cannot see why it should be so peculiarly humiliating.

Let the case be put as strongly as observation may warrant us to do. Let it be granted that weeks must pass before the infant will give any proof of any faculty superior to those of irrational animals. Let it

be added that no animal is so physically helpless, so destitute of power, as the infant for some time after his birth. And thus let the commencement of human life occupy the lowest place even in the scale of mere animal existence.

Still I confess that, in a moral point of view, I cannot find any thing humiliating in this fact.

To see a rational being brutalized—that indeed may be called the severest lesson to anyone who has a wish to vindicate the moral character of human nature. But this most humiliating observation will bear no comparison with the fact now before us.

For who is not aware of the immense difference between a state of animal existence to which the manifestation of spiritual life will succeed, and a high moral and responsible existence in which the germs of that life have been suppressed, and blighted. In the one instance, we look forward to progressive elevation; in the other, we turn away from successive degradation. Before the light of intelligence has appeared, before the voice of conscience has spoken, neither error nor corruption can exist; but where the one has been darkened, and the other is slighted, there may we lament over the blindness, the selfishness of man.

Instead therefore of dwelling exclusively on the want of an intellectual and moral principle, we ought rather to watch its first appearance; instead of reviling

the work of the Creator, we ought to acknowledge his wisdom in opening at whatever period it may please Him the eyes of his creatures, and unclosing to them both a visible world full of miracles, and a spiritual world full of blessings: instead of complaining, than which nothing can be more wrong and more unwise, that He has not created us more perfect, we ought rather to examine ourselves, how far we are still from that point of perfection which He has placed within our reach.

I have said thus much because the subject affords frequent scope to thoughtless and frivolous remarks, which might perhaps in some measure contribute to dampen the zeal and interest of mothers. But I trust that a mother will always consult her own experience and her own heart, rather than the sophistry of those who cannot feel with her.

Let her then consider the stranger on her breast as a being destined for a better existence than the one in which he now unconsciously looks up to her for that support which Providence has placed it in her means to give. Let her not only follow that instinctive affection which could not allow her to be insensible to the wants of her infant; let her look forward to the time in which her infant shall be alive to a sense of duty in this, and to hope for another world: and let her not forget that while such is the destination of

her infant, on her involves the task of preparing and of teaching him the first and most difficult steps of his path.

And when the first weeks of anxiety on her part, and of unconsciousness on that of her infant, are over; when the attention which is required, becomes monotonous and wearying; then will the mother feel a longing for something to animate the scene, to enhance the interest and to encourage her to new exertions.

Nor shall she be disappointed; for the day will come, when the infant will no longer apply to the mother only because her attention and her support are to him a source of animal gratification. The day will come when his eye will catch the eye of the mother; when it will read there a language new and yet not unknown; when that look of love will call into life the first smile to play round the lips of the infant.

With this fact a new era begins in the infant's life. With it a new world opens to his view. He has entered a new stage of existence; he has vindicated his character as a being superior to the rest of the animal creation.

The smile of joy and the tear of sympathy are denied to the animal race. They are given to man; they constitute a tacit language, common to all and understood

because felt by all. They are the earliest signs of feelings which belong exclusively to man.

They are the early witnesses whose meaning cannot be mistaken of internal emotions. The character of these emotions may change; they may be momentary or permanent and their objects may extend to endless variety; but the signs which Nature has appointed for them remain the same; and thus they will continue through life the never-failing indexes of feeling, whether it be clouded in silent grief, or wrapped in tranquil serenity; whether it make the bosom throb with agony, or heave with delight.

LETTER XI

DECEMBER 5, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I have tried in my last letter to justify on philosophical grounds the importance which every mother is inclined to attach to the epoch when the eye of her infant for the first time meets her own; when the expression of love in her own countenance for the first time calls into play a similar expression in the features of the infant.

This fact, which a mother will always hail with a delight inconceivable to those who cannot share in her feelings, may lead her to a train of considerations which she will never repent of having duly weighed, and in which I shall now attempt to follow her.

The first great truth, which cannot but strike her at the very outset, is this:—it was by *kindness*, by a manifestation of maternal love, that she has produced the first visible impression on the eye and the features of her infant. She will be fully justified by experience, if she recognizes in this impression the first influence of her individual conduct on the mind and the heart of the infant.

Let her never lose sight of this fact. Providence by ordering that it should be thus in the course of nature has pointed out to her a leading truth, if she will but advert to it, which she may lay down as a never-failing principle of education. In the formation of character, as well as in the mode of giving instruction, kindness ought to be the first and ruling principle. It certainly is the most powerful. Fear may do much, and other motives may be employed with apparent success; but to interest the mind and to form the heart, nothing is so permanently influential as affection: it is the easiest way to attain the highest ends.

I have called the fact of which I am now speaking a manifestation of the spiritual nature in man. As such, it will invite the mother to take a new view of her relation to the child.

Her child is, like herself, a being endowed with spiritual faculties—with faculties superior to and in a great measure independent of animal life. The less they are developed in their present state, the greater is the attention which they require.

Providence has instructed her with the means of supplying the animal wants of the child. We have seen that the child also is instructed with an animal instinct, which facilitates the task. But the eye of the child when it meets that of the mother does not seek for the mere gratification of a present want, or

for relief from a present sensation of uneasiness: it seeks for something more; it speaks of the first want of spiritual nature; it seeks for sympathy.

The animal instinct is a principle which knows no higher object than self. Self-preservation is the first point which it tries to secure; and in its progressive desire of enjoyment self is still the centre of its agency.

It is not the same with the mind or with the affections of the heart. The fact which speaks most unquestionably for the spiritual nature of man is the sacrifice of personal comfort or enjoyment for the happiness of others; the subordination of individual desire to higher purposes.

A moral philosopher has said that whenever the mind reflects on the future or the invisible in preference to the present and to visible objects, then the spirit asserts its right.

If we connect this observation with the preceding remarks, we may deduce from them a few plain and practical rules by which the mother may be enabled without any pretensions to deep and laborous research to do much that will prove truly beneficial to the highest interests of her infant and to the better part of its nature.

Any measure that we would recommend her at so early a period must of course be practicable without anything like instruction; it must not induce her to

go out of the way which Providence has assigned to her; it must not be of a nature that could be modified or rendered more difficult by her situation in life, whatever it may be: it must in fact be limited to the manner and the spirit in which that is done which every mother has both the wish and the faculty of doing for her infant.

LETTER XII

DECEMBER 8, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

We have seen that the animal instinct is always intent on instantaneous gratification, without ever adverting to the comfort or interest of others.

As long as no other faculty is awake, this instinct and its exclusive dominion over the child cannot properly be considered as faulty; there is not yet any consciousness in it: if it be selfish in appearance, it is not wilfully so; and the Creator himself seems to have ordained that it should be so strong, and indeed exclusively prevailing, while consciousness and other faculties could not yet contribute to secure even the first conditions of animal life—self-preservation.

But if after the first indication of a higher principle this instinct be still allowed to act unchecked and uncontrolled as before, then it will commence to be at war with conscience, and every step in which it is indulged will carry the child farther in selfishness, at the expense of his better and more amiable nature.

I wish this to be clearly understood; and I shall

perhaps better succeed in explaining the rules which I conceive to flow from it for the use of the mother, than in dwelling longer on the abstract position. In the first place, let the mother adhere steadfastly to the good old rule, to be regular in her attention to the infant; to pursue as much as possible the same course; never to neglect the wants of her child when they are real, and never to indulge them when they are imaginary, or because they are expressed with importunity. The earlier and the more constant her adherence to this practice, the greater and the more lasting will be the real benefit for her child.*

The expediency and the advantages of such a plan will soon be perceived, if it is constantly practised.

*“ It seems plain to me that the principle of all virtue and excellence lies in a power of denying ourselves the satisfaction of our own desires, where reason does not authorize them. This power is to be got and improved by custom, made easy and familiar by an *early practice*. If, therefore, I might be heard, I would advise that, contrary to the ordinary way, children should be used to submit their desires and go without their longings *even from their early cradles*. If the world commonly does otherwise, I cannot help that. I am saying what I think should be done, which, if it were already in fashion, I should not need to trouble the world with a discourse on this subject.”—*Locke on Education*, § 28.

The first advantage will be on the part of the mother. She will be subject to fewer interruptions; she will be less tempted to give way to ill-humor; though her patience may be tried, yet her temper will not be ruffled: she will upon all occasions derive real satisfaction from her intercourse with her child; and her duties will not more often remind her than her enjoyments that she is a mother.

But the advantage will be still greater on the part of the child.

Every mother will be able to speak from experience either to the benefit which her children derived from such a treatment or to the unfavorable consequences of a contrary proceeding. In the first instance their wants will have been few and easily satisfied; and there is not a more infallible criterion of perfect good health. But if on the contrary that rule has been neglected; if from a wish to avoid anything like severity a mother has been tempted to give way to unlimited indulgence, it will but too soon appear that her treatment, however well-meant, has been injudicious. It will be a source of constant uneasiness to her without giving satisfaction to her child; she will have sacrificed her own rest without securing the happiness of her child.

Let the mothers who have been unfortunate enough to fall into this mistake tell whether they have not had

frequent occasion to repent of their ill-timed indulgence, unless they had the still greater misfortune of substituting in its place the other extreme—a habit of indolence and cold neglect. And let the children who were brought up in early youth under an excess of indulgence, tell whether they have not been suffering under the consequences; whether hurrying on from excitement to excitement, they have ever felt that health and tranquillity, that evenness of spirits, which is the first requisite to rational enjoyment and to lasting happiness.

Let them tell whether such a system is apt to give a relish for the innocent sports, for the never-to-be-forgotten feats of boyhood; whether it imparts energy to withstand the temptation, or to share in the noble enthusiasm of youth; whether it ensures firmness and success to the exertions of manhood.

We are not all born to be philosophers; but we aspire all to a sound state both of mind and body, and of this the leading feature is —*to desire little, and to be satisfied with even less.*

LETTER XIII

DECEMBER 12, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

The greatest benefit that results from a treatment of the child such as the good old rule enjoins is of a moral nature.

When I speak of moral benefit or of moral deterioration, I do not lose sight of the tender age to which I would ascribe it. I am not now speaking of a child in whom reason has in some degree been developed, and to whom you may attempt with some hope of success to explain the ideas of right or wrong on which our private duties and the fabric of our social system are founded.

No; I am speaking of that period of infancy at which many and perhaps most philosophers would contend that a moral faculty is either totally wanting or at least dormant.

If, therefore, what I have to say on the subject shall appear altogether visionary, I have only to reply that I am ready to give it up whenever I shall stand convicted of its nullity by *experience*.

Till then I mean to hold that the better nature of the infant must be encouraged as early as possible to struggle against the over-growing power of the animal instinct, which I consider as the basis of the lower nature of man.

The agency of this animal instinct will become more manifest with every subsequent day of the infant's life. This instinct, now no more content with its first efforts which were necessary to self-preservation, is rapidly increasing in strength. *The eagerness of this craving of an infant forms a strong contrast with the weakness of its physical powers.* It would grasp every object which it perceives; there is nothing that strikes its curiosity but that at the same time excites its desires; and the inconceivable obstinacy of this craving increases in the same measure as the object is placed out of its reach.

Whatever there is ungainly and unamiable in a little child will be found in some way or other connected with the agency of this animal instinct. For even the impatience of the infant while under the influence of circumstances which may cause physical pain, is no more than a reaction of that instinct.

If we consider the state of the infant, with its desires and its impatience, we shall see that it furnishes a striking parallel to the image of man under the influence of his passions.

It is customary to say that passion should be overcome by principle, and that our desires should be regulated by reason. But at a time when we cannot yet appeal to either, Providence has supplied a still more powerful agent in their stead,—maternal love.

The only influence to which the heart is accessible long before the understanding could have adopted or rejected it as a motive, is affection. And it is a fact that no person can be so well qualified at an early period to gain the affection of a child as the mother.

If, therefore, I find it asserted by an eminent writer that in order to settle your authority over your children, “Fear and awe ought to give you the first power over their minds, and love and friendship in riper years to hold it*”—I can only imagine, that a mistake has led that writer into a statement which is openly at war with the enlightened sentiments expressed in so many other pages of his valuable work.

For even supposing for a moment, that the course which appears to be recommended in the above passage were found expedient and beneficial, as I am convinced that it will not be, still I cannot see how it should even be practicable at the time that I am speaking of.

“Fear” implies a knowledge of the consequences of an action or an event. It implies a consciousness

*Locke, § 42.

of causality; and causality, in its turn, pre-supposes a faculty of observing, comparing, and combining a variety of facts, and of deducing from them a conclusion.

Surely the ingenious writer from whom I have quoted could not have given credit to the infant for a course of reasoning so complicated, so foreign to the state of its mental faculties.

“ Fear,” then, we shall be obliged to dismiss at once. Even if it were not, as a motive of action, unworthy of a human being, it would be inapplicable at the first and certainly not the least important period of life.

By “ awe ” may be understood either an indistinct and vague feeling, which casts a veil over the mind, and while it works upon the imagination and the nervous system, has nothing to do with reasoning, and is not fit to direct the faculties to a certain line of action; or else, “ awe ” may be said to originate in a conviction of the moral superiority of another being that pervades the mind and prompts the heart to look with veneration on subjects which the intellect is unable to scan, and to follow precepts which have received their sanction from Infinite Wisdom.

That awe, in the first mentioned sense, has some affinity with the first sensations of an infant, I admit. But everything of that sort that may be said to belong

to infancy originates in a feeling of helplessness, or of occasional pain. It may then be said to be a mere physical phænomenon: and as such I conceive that it would be little qualified for a motive to be employed in moral education. But besides, it could not serve as a motive, because from its nature it is a mere transient sensation, and cannot of course lead to a constant line of conduct, or contribute to form a moral habit. Awe, in the other sense, again seems to pre-suppose more than one idea to which the infant is yet and must for some time continue to be a stranger. Moral worth can only be appreciated when there is a consciousness of moral energy. And if divested from its character as a moral feeling, it will be dissolved into fear. But in the better sense the feeling of awe, which is essential in the formation of religious ideas and in the communication of religious impressions, ought to be reserved for that period when it will be first excited by a consideration of that Being to Whom with the exclusion of all finite beings, that feeling may be said to be due in a pre-eminent degree.

LETTER XIV

DECEMBER 17, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

From the reasons stated in my last letter, I think it right to assume that maternal love is the most powerful agent, and that affection is the primitive motive in early education.

In the first exercise of her authority, the mother will therefore do well to be cautious that every step may be justified by her conscience and by experience; she will do well to think of her responsibility, and of the important consequences of her measures for the future welfare of her child; she will find that the only correct view of the nature of her own authority is to look upon it as a duty rather than as a prerogative, and never to consider it as absolute.

If the infant remains quiet, if it is not impatient or troublesome, it will do so *for the sake of the mother*.

I would wish every mother to pay attention to the difference between a course of action adopted in compliance with *the authority* and a conduct pursued *for the sake of another*.

The first proceeds from reasoning, the second flows from affection. The first may be abandoned, when the immediate cause may have ceased to exist; the latter will be permanent, as it did not depend upon circumstances or accidental considerations, but is founded in a moral and constant principle.

In the case now before us, if the infant does not disappoint the hope of the mother it will be a proof, first of affection, and secondly, of confidence.

Of affection—for the earliest and the most innocent wish to please is that of the infant to please the mother. If it be questioned whether that wish can at all exist in one so little advanced in development, I would again, as upon almost all occasions, appeal to the experience of mothers.

It is a proof also of confidence. Whenever an infant has been neglected, when the necessary attention has not been paid to its wants, and when, instead of the smile of kindness, it has been treated with the frown of severity, it will be difficult to restore it to that quiet and amiable disposition in which it will wait for the gratification of its desires without impatience, and enjoy it without greediness.

If affection and confidence have once gained ground in the heart, it will be the first duty of the mother to do everything in her power to encourage, to strengthen, and to elevate this principle.

She must encourage it, or the yet tender emotion will subside, and the strings which are no longer attuned to sympathy will cease to vibrate and sink into silence. But affection has never yet been encouraged except by affection; and confidence has never been gained except by confidence: the tone of her own mind must raise that of her child's.

For she must be intent also upon strengthening that principle. Now there is one means only for strengthening any energy, and that means is practice. The same effort, constantly repeated, will become less and less difficult, and every power, mental or physical, will go through a certain exercise with more assurance and success, the more it grows familiar with it by custom. There cannot, therefore, be a safer course for the mother to pursue than to be careful that her proceedings may without interruption or dissonance be calculated to excite the affection and secure the confidence of her child. She must not give way to ill humor or tedium, not for one moment; for it is difficult to say how the child may be affected by the most trifling circumstance. It cannot examine the motives, nor can it anticipate the consequences, of an action: with little more than a general impression of the past it is entirely unconscious of the future; and thus the present bears upon the infant mind with the full weight of pain, or soothes it with the undiminished charm of pleasing

emotions. If the mother consider this well, she may spare her child the feeling of much pain which, though not remembered as occasioned by special occurrences, may yet leave a cloud as it were upon the mind, and gradually weaken that feeling which it is her interest as well as her duty to keep awake.

But it is not enough for her to encourage and strengthen,—she must also elevate that same feeling.

She must not rest satisfied with the success which the benevolence of her own intentions, and perhaps the disposition and temper of her child, may have facilitated: she must recollect that education is not a uniform and mechanical process, but a work of gradual and progressive improvement. Her present success must not betray her into security or indolence; and the difficulties which she may chance to meet with must not dampen her zeal, or stop her endeavors. She must bear in mind the ultimate ends of education; she must always be ready to take her share in the work which as a mother she stands pledged to forward—the elevation of the moral nature of man.

LETTER XV

DECEMBER 24, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Of all the affections of our nature, the most deserving of encouragement, the most kindred to the standard of true humanity, are no doubt those which are not confined to perishable objects; which do not solely act upon the imagination, but which are apt to expand the mind and inspire the heart with a noble zeal for all that is truly excellent.

This consideration is of incalculable importance for the interest of moral education. It should form the very basis of all that a plan of education may propose or a system comprehend.

If it is necessary to store the mind with knowledge, to enlighten the intellect, and to explain correct principles of morality; if it is desirable to form the taste; it is still more so, it is indeed indispensable, to direct, to purify, to elevate the affections of the heart: and we cannot commence at too early a period to proceed upon this principle.

I have been led into these remarks by the idea ex-

pressed in the concluding part of my last letter,—that the affection and confidence which the infant bears to the mother should be elevated as well as encouraged and strengthened. It will not perhaps be superfluous to say a few words more in explanation of that proposition.

If the affections of the child were to remain for ever concentrated in the focus of his love of the mother; if his confidence were for ever confined to her; however well she may have deserved the tribute of never-failing gratitude, it is obvious that the child must earlier or later in his career experience the most severe pain and disappointment, for which with that exclusive direction of his moral nature he could then find no remedy. The time must come when the tie, however sacred, which unites him visibly with his mother must be broken: and whether it may be so ordained that it be rudely snapped or gently and gradually loosened, still the ultimate effect would be the same, equally painful and afflicting.

Not even the most sincere advocate for filial affection, than which few feelings can be purer or deeper, —not even he who is most intimately penetrated by that sentiment, would wish to contend for the exclusive and constant ascendancy of that principle over the mind. If we do not mean to lose sight entirely of the higher destination and of the most exalted duties

of man, we cannot conceal from ourselves that man is not created "so noble in reason, so infinite in faculties" to give up his whole existence to his affection for any one individual, while the most comprehensive view of his duties, both to his Maker and to his fellow-men, is clearly laid before him by a thousand witnesses, whose voices he cannot but hear.

It is clear, therefore, that the affection of the child to the mother is only to be appreciated in proportion as it serves to impress the infant mind with those emotions, and afterwards to render familiar to it those considerations, which belong to the ultimate ends, as far as we may understand them, of the Creator in the formation of man.

If a mother is conscious of this, she will not find it difficult to take the right view of the affection which Providence has implanted in her child. She will consider it as the germ on which every better feeling must be engrafted. She will be led to consider herself as the instrument which Providence has chosen to purify that affection, to transfer its most intense agency to a still worthier object. She will then begin to understand why the most unlimited confidence springs so early and voluntarily from the very nature of the child. She will begin to understand that the infant is taught so early to confide in order that one day this confidence may be centred and elevated to the confi-

dence of a faith that will stand unshaken by danger and unsullied by corruption.

Let me here allude, my dear friend, to an occasional circumstance which would have invited me to these reflections, even if I had not been engaged in conversing with you on the same theme. The date of this letter will, perhaps, remind you of a custom of my country which you have observed while living amongst us. The days on which the Nativity of our Lord is commemorated in our churches have been adopted, since time immemorial, as a season at which the children in every family receive from their parents and from each other little tokens of affection. Need I recall to your recollection those scenes of innocent and heartfelt joy with which you were so much pleased when you witnessed them among our children? They will convey to the mind of every observer a striking proof how little is requisite to give the most intense satisfaction and to afford infinite gratification, where there is a real stock of affection, and where that simplicity of heart is still left which it should be the care of education to preserve as long as possible. You have seen that those days are amongst us a real festival of affection, in its fullest and most pleasing sense: and you will certainly not have found that the children whose hearts were just then under the influence of affection were less accessible to the call of sincere and heartfelt devotion.

I have mentioned this circumstance, because it would afford a copious theme for reflection on the subject that I have been treating of.

It is upon facts like this, which experience will at some time or other suggest to every parent, that I would ground the practical proof for the proposition that the affections, and especially the early affection of children to their parents, might be intimately connected with and essentially conducive to their being imbued with those impressions, the object of which is more important than every human consideration, and more sacred than every human tie.

LETTER XVI

DECEMBER 31, 1818.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

If the mother has once accustomed herself to take the view to which I alluded in my last, of the affection and the confidence of her infant, all her duties will appear to her in a new light.

She will then look upon education, not as a task which to her is invariably connected with much labor and difficulty, but as a work of which the facility and in a great measure the success is dependent on herself. She will look upon her own efforts in behalf of her child not as a matter of indifference or of convenience, but as a most sacred and most weighty obligation. She will be convinced that education does not consist in a series of admonitions and corrections, of rewards and punishments, of injunctions and directions, strung together without unity of purpose or dignity of execution; but that it ought to present an unbroken chain of measures, originating in the same principle,—in a knowledge of the constant laws of our nature; practised in the same spirit,—a spirit of benevolence and firmness; and leading to the same end,—the elevation of man to the true dignity of a spiritual being.

But will the mother be able to spiritualize the unfolding faculties, the rising emotions of her infant? Will she be able to overcome those obstacles which the preponderance of the animal nature will throw in her way?

Not unless she has first lent her own heart to the influence of a higher principle; not unless the germs of a spiritual love and faith which she is to develop in her child have first gained ground in the better affections of her own being.

Here, then, it will be necessary for the mother to pause and examine herself, how far she may expect to succeed in inculcating that to which in her own practice she may have been a stranger more than she would wish to confess to herself. But let her be sincere, for once; and if the result of her examination be less favorable to her own expectations and less flattering to her self-love, let her resolution be the more sincere and vigorous to discard for the future all those minor predilections, to check all those wishes which might alienate her from her new task; and to give her whole heart to that which will promote her own final happiness and that of her child.

However difficult it may appear at first to resign, to dismiss the thought of some hopes, and to defer the accomplishment of others, still that struggle is for the very best cause, and if serious cannot be unsuccessful:

for there is not an act of resignation, there is not a single fact in the moral world, however distinguished, to which maternal love could not furnish a parallel.

If the mother is but conscious of the sincerity of her own intentions, if she has raised the tone of her own mind and elevated the affections of her being above the sphere of subordinate and frivolous pursuits, she will soon be enabled to ascertain the efficacy of her influence on the child.

Her best and almost infallible criterion will be whether she really succeeds in accustoming her child to the practice of self-denial.

Of all the moral habits which may be formed by a judicious education, that of self-denial is the most difficult to acquire and the most beneficial when adopted.

I call it a habit; for though it rests upon a principle, yet it is only by engendering a habit that that principle gives evidence of its vitality. The practice of all other virtues, and more especially many of the actions which are admired and held out as examples, may be the result of a well-understood moral rule which had long been theoretically known before it was applied in a practical case; or again they may have flown from a momentary enthusiasm, which acts with irresistible power on a mind alive to noble sentiments. But a practice of self-denial, conscientiously and cheerfully

pursued, can be the fruit only of a long and constant habit.

The greatest difficulty which the mother will find in her early attempts to form that habit in her infant does not rest with the importunity of the infant, but with her own weakness.

If she is not herself able to resign her own comfort and her own fond desires to her maternal love, she must not think of obtaining such a result in the infant for her own sake. It is impossible to inspire others with a moral feeling if she is not herself pervaded with it. To endear any virtue to another she must herself look upon her own duty with pleasure. If she has known Virtue only as the awe-inspiring Goddess,—

“ With gate and garb austere,
And threatening brow severe”,—

she will never obtain that mastery over the heart which is not yielded up to authority but bestowed as the free gift of affection.

But if the mother has in the discipline of early years or in the experience of life herself gone through a school of self-denial; if she has nourished in her own heart the principle of active benevolence; if she knows resignation, not by name only but from practice; then her eloquence, her look of maternal love, her example, will be persuasive, and the infant will in a future day bless her memory and honor it by virtues.

LETTER XVII

JANUARY 7, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I am anxious to elucidate some statements of a preceding letter, concerning the early practice of self-denial. Allow me for this purpose to resume the subject of my last; and if I shall appear to have dwelt too long on a favorite theme or to have recurred to it too often, may I hope that you will ascribe this circumstance at least not *solely* to the loquaciousness of old age, but also to my conviction of the vital importance of the subject.

The more I have seen of the mental and moral misery under which thousands of our fellow-creatures are suffering; the more frequently I have observed the wealth without content, the splendor without happiness, among the higher classes; the closer I have investigated into the first springs of those mighty convulsions which have shaken the world and made even our peaceful valleys ring with the shouts of war and with the wailing of despair; the more have I been confirmed in the view that the immediate causes of all this and of much misery that yet remains unmentioned have arisen from

an undue superiority which the desires of the lower nature of man have assumed over the energies of the mind and the better affections of the heart.

And I cannot see any remedy placed within the reach of human power to check the further progress of this misery and the ulterior demoralization of our race, but the early influence of mothers, to break by firmness the increasing power of animal selfishness, and to overcome it by affection.

This is the end to which I would wish the practice of self-denial to contribute. For this reason I insist on the circumspection to be employed by mothers in controlling the cravings of infants.

For this reason I would again and again request the mother to be watchful in her care, to do all in her power and to do it with cheerfulness, that none of its real wants may rest unattended to. For it is not only her duty to do so in order to provide for the physical well-being of the child; but a neglect of this duty is to be still more anxiously avoided because it might cast a shadow on her own affection, and provoke, if not doubts, at least a feeling of uneasiness which might afterwards lead to them.

But for this same reason I would entreat a mother to be constantly on her guard against her own weakness; never to indulge the appetite of the child with what may be stimulating to further desire or what is

at best superfluous; and never to encourage importunity.*

What I call weakness she may perhaps call affection.

But let her be persuaded that the character of true affection is far different. The affection for which she would plead is merely animal: it is a feeling for which she cannot account and which she cannot resist. It may become to her also the basis of a more elevated feeling of spiritualized maternal love. But to experience the latter she must have opened her own heart to the influence of spiritual views and principles. She must herself know how to bear and forbear, to resign and be humble. She must know a higher object of her wishes, a purer source of enjoyment than present gratification. She must weigh the experience of the past and ponder the duties of the future. Her own interest and her own desires must not interfere with more

*“ An infallible way of rendering a child unhappy, is to indulge it in all its demands. Its desires multiply by gratification, without ever resting satisfied: it is lucky for the indulging parents, if it demand not the moon for a plaything. You cannot give everything; and your refusal is more distressing than if you had stopped short at first. A child in pain is entitled to great indulgence; but beware of yielding to fancy; the more the child is indulged, the more headstrong it grows, and the more impatient of a disappointment.”
—*Lord Kames (Loose Hints on Education)*, i. 54.

momentous obligations, or weaken her attachment and her zeal for the welfare of others. Her affections must not be centred in self; her wishes and her hopes must not be limited to the things of this world.

What is born of the flesh must perish. If such be her affection to her child, it will die away before she is able to do anything for its real interest. But if her affection is of a higher origin; if its efforts bear the stamp of a calm, a mild, and a conscientious spirit, it will enable her to conquer her own weakness, and to elevate by a judicious control the rising emotions of her infant.

To those who have not had an opportunity of observing it frequently, it is impossible to form an idea of the rapidity and eagerness with which the animal instinct grows, if left to itself without the salutary check of maternal influence. *But the means so frequently employed even by mothers to restrain its growth by the fear of punishment can tend only to make the evil worse.* The mere act of forbidding is a strong excitement to desire. Fear can never act as a moral restraint; it can act only as a stimulus to the physical appetite; it exasperates and alienates the mind.

This then is gained by severity.* Its consequences

*“ I absolutely prohibit severity; which will render the child timid, and introduce a habit of dissimula-

are no doubt as mischievous as those of indulgence. Against an excess of both I can only repeat the recommendation of *affection and firmness*.

From these two guiding principles the mother will derive the satisfaction to see that when her infant from an inability to understand her motives cannot yet respect her as a wise mother, it will for the kindness of her manner obey her as a loving mother.

tion,—the worst of habits. If such severity be exercised, so as to alienate the child's affections, there is an end to education; the parent, or keeper, is transformed into a cruel tyrant over a trembling slave. Beware, on the other hand, of betraying any uneasiness in refusing what a child calls for unreasonably: perceiving your uneasiness, it will renew its attempt, hoping to find you in better humor. Even infants, some at least, are capable of this artifice; therefore, if an infant explains by signs, what it ought to have, let it be gratified instantly, with a cheerful countenance. If it desire what it ought not to have, let the refusal be sedate, but firm. Regard not its crying: it will soon give over, if not listened to. The task is easier with a child, who understands what is said to it: say only with a firm tone, that it cannot have what it desires; but without showing any heat on the one hand, or concern on the other. The child, believing that the thing is impossible, will cease to fret."—*Loose Hints on Education*, i. 48.

LETTER XVIII

JANUARY 14, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I have already alluded to the period when the child is separated from the immediate influence of maternal love.

It is natural for a mother to look forward to that period with much anxiety. The time will come, and come when it may it will always be too soon for her, when she must give up the satisfaction of herself directing every step, of watching and assisting the progress of her child. A thousand apprehensions will be excited in her breast; a thousand dangers real or imaginary will appear to beset every step; and a thousand temptations will seem to lurk under the joys and the tasks of life into which her child is now to enter. These apprehensions will be felt at an earlier time for a son, because the present system of society dismisses him earlier from the immediate influence of the mother. And though he may still be under the care of an affectionate parent or of judicious and benevolent teachers, yet will a mother feel a void on the occasion when he is for the first time separated from her side.

Then she will be disposed to retrace all the different stages of his gradual development: the little history of his present habits, the moments in which she best succeeded in giving salutary impressions and in which his affection promised fair to overcome the less amiable part of his temper: she will be disposed to dwell more particularly on those facts which may justify a hope that her labor has not been in vain; that one day she shall see the fruits of her early care.

But while she will be disposed thus to dwell on the exhilarating prospect before her, her imagination and indeed her affection will be busy in sketching out the various scenes of his future life. The next few years may perhaps be an object altogether of less solicitude; but how should not a mother be strongly affected by the idea that soon, very soon, he whose tender infancy she had been protecting will have to meet life unprepared, unless it be by the advice of his friends, by the vital energy of his principles, and by a small but perhaps dearly-bought stock of experience. Recollections of the past and anticipations of the future will crowd before her eyes, and as she may dismiss or resume them her bosom will be alive to the emotions of alternate hope and fear.

“ The golden morning of his days,
A mother’s watchful care surveys ;
But shafts fly quickly from the string,
And years are fast upon the wing :—

He tears him from a mother's side,
Eager on stormy life to roam,
With pilgrim steps he wanders wide,
Returns a stranger to his home."

But a thinking mother will not wait till these considerations are suggested by the necessity of a separation which can no longer be postponed. She will at an early period have occasion to reflect on the nature and the duration of her connection with the child. And far from giving rise to unpleasant or even painful feelings, this train of thought may enable her to take not only a just, but also a gratifying view of the subject.

In a previous letter I have spoken of the first connection of the mother and the child after its birth as being merely a phenomenon of animal nature. By this I understand that in both the power which unites them is in its origin instinctive. In the infant it is constantly excited by a feeling of want; in the mother it is strongly supported by a consciousness of duty.

If in the mother also I ascribe to it a sort of instinctive agency, observation will I think furnish many facts which will clearly prove it. Among them it is not the least remarkable that in a person who has from circumstances been called upon to act as a mother to the infant of a stranger, the same affection is very frequently engendered as if it had been her own child. And this has been observed not only in cases when the nurse had

been much grieved for the separation from her own child, but when at first she had even evinced decided aversion to the child now confided to her care. So that the maternal instinct would seem to be transferable, as it were, to another object; an observation which argues at once for its original energy, and for its priority to the circumstances under which a sense of duty alone might have led to the same efforts.

But if in the infant this instinct is manifested before a distinct sensation of its wants was possible, and if it has acted in the mother before she has reflected on her duties, there is yet as we have seen one feature, and that of a pleasing kind, by which the character of this instinct is distinguished. This feature is no other than affection.

This affection, again, we may call instinctive, in its first origin. In the infant it is at first quite exclusive; its only object is the mother.

Still more: not only is the attachment of the infant limited to the mother, but it seems to be accessible to no kind of sensation unless in some manner connected with her. Unpleasant sensations immediately make it look for relief or protection to her; and however earnestly strangers may exert themselves to amuse the infant, it is well known how difficult it is for them to fix its attention without distressing instead of pleasing.

But this state of things cannot continue very long.

The more the child grows physically independent of the mother, the more it gets accustomed to use its senses and also its faculties, the less chance will there be for its affection to continue still exclusively confined to the mother.

And here it will become necessary for the mother to be cautious as well against the temptation of monopolizing as against the danger of alienating its affection.

LETTER XIX

JANUARY 19, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

I have in my last letter supposed an infant to be arrived at the period when the immediate connection with the mother begins gradually to loosen itself.

The different degrees of the relaxation of this tie must in a great measure depend on the natural disposition and even on the physical constitution of the child. A sickly child, or one whose first movements are marked by timidity, will for a long time know of affection or confidence in no other person than the mother.

But children of a healthy constitution will soon give signs of an inclination to make themselves independent of the assistance of others. They will be found to observe a great many objects to which their attention has not in any way been called; next to observation, or rather together with it, will come desire; and instead of expressing this by their usual signs and waiting patiently till it is complied with, they will make attempts to reach the object and appropriate it to themselves. These exertions, which at first are very imperfect and sometimes ludicrous to the beholders,

will be repeated every time with greater energy till at length they succeed, and if it is impossible to succeed, the desire instead of subsiding will be only increased.

I have already alluded to these cravings of the infant, and spoken of the necessity to counteract them by firmness and benevolence.

But I did not then mean to describe them as something which in itself was bad or blamable. I described them as the necessary effects of the animal instinct, of which even an excess, though to be prevented, yet could not at that tender age be punishable; and from this reason, while I recommended an affectionate mode of counteracting them, or rather of substituting something better in their place, I decided against every measure that might proceed from severity.

If on such a plan a mother has succeeded in repressing the inordinate cravings, she will not then have the least occasion to look with other feelings than those of gratification on those little attempts at independence. They are the most unquestionable signs of the progress which a child has been making. And if they are well directed, she may look upon them as the precursors of a long and laudable activity.

All the faculties will appear to take part in the development of the child. They will all be called into play by circumstances which surround the child every day and almost every hour.

Who knows not that it is an event in the life of every one of us to be able for the first time to walk without assistance? It is an event which is commemorated in the family and related to all the friends, who severally express their joy at the long-wished-for consummation.

I would certainly not wish to spoil their joy at the event: I am far from underrating its importance: but I would at the same time wish to bestow in addition to their congratulations a few moments upon a more serious consideration.

The time when a child first begins to walk without assistance is indeed an epoch in the history of his education. It is evident that it is the most marked step of physical independence of others. But at the same time it occasions a new mode of manifestation of the affection.

The child, who is now able to move as he chooses, is also able to come to the mother. Instead of seeking for her with the eye only, or stretching out the little arms after her, the child is now enabled to seek the presence of the mother; and the more this has the appearance of a free and voluntary effort, the more endearing will it be to the mother as a new sign of affection, which continues and may long continue a bond between them, when the last trace has disappeared of the helplessness which had first claimed it.

LETTER XX

JANUARY 25, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

In describing the manner in which the immediate influence of the mother is gradually weakened, and the connection between her and the child loosened, we must not stop at the enumeration of those facts which I have detailed in my last.

It is not the mere physical growth, the acquirement of the full use of all the faculties of the body, which constitutes the independence of the child. The offspring of the animal creation have indeed reached the highest point of their development when they are strong enough to subsist and provide for themselves. But it is far otherwise with the offspring of man.

In the progress of time the child not only is daily exercising its physical faculties, but begins also to feel intellectually and morally independent.

From observation and memory there is only one step to reflection. Though imperfect, yet this operation is frequently found among the early exercises of the infant mind. The powerful stimulus of inquisitiveness prompts to exertions which if successful or encouraged by others will lead to a habit of thought.

If we inquire into the cause of the habit of thoughtlessness which is so frequently complained of, we shall find that there has been a want of judicious encouragement of the first attempts at thought.

Children are troublesome; their questions are of little consequence; they are constantly asking about what they do not understand; they must not have their will; they must learn to be silent.

This reasoning is frequently adopted, and, in consequence, means are found to deter children from the provoking practice of their inquisitiveness.

I am certainly of the opinion that they should not be indulged in a habit of asking idle questions. Many of their questions certainly betray nothing more than a childish curiosity. But it would be astonishing if it were otherwise; and the more judicious should be the answers which they receive.

You are acquainted with my opinion that as soon as the infant has reached a certain age, every object that surrounds him might be made instrumental to the excitement of thought. You are aware of the principles which I have laid down, and the exercises which I have pointed out to mothers.* You have frequently expressed

*“ The best practical explanation, in English, of these details will be found in the several numbers of the publication, ‘ Hints to Parents. In the spirit of Pestalozzi’s method.’ ”

your astonishment at the success with which mothers who followed my plan, or who had formed a similar one of their own, were constantly employed in awakening in very young children the dormant faculties of thought. The keenness with which they followed what was laid before them, the regularity with which they went through their little exercises, has given you the conviction that upon a similar plan it would be easy not only for a mother to educate a few, but for a teacher also to manage a large number of very young children. But I have not now to do with the means which may be best appropriated to the purpose of developing thought. I merely want to point to the fact that thought will spring up in the infant mind; and that though neglected or even misdirected, yet a restless intellectual activity must sooner or later enable the child in more than one respect to grow *intellectually independent* of others.

But the most important step is that which concerns the affections of the heart.

The infant very soon commences to show by signs and by its whole conduct that it is pleased with some persons, and that it entertains a dislike, or rather that it is in fear of others.

In this respect habit and circumstances may do much; but I think it will be generally observed that an infant will be easily accustomed to the sight and the atten-

tions of those whom it sees frequently and in friendly relation to the mother.

Impressions of this kind are not lost upon children. The friends of the mother soon become those of the infant. An atmosphere of kindness is the most kindred to its own nature. It is unconsciously accustomed to that atmosphere, and from the undisturbed smile and the clear and cheerful glance of the eye it is evident that it enjoys it.

The infant, then, learns to love those whom the mother considers with affection. It learns to confide in those in whom the mother shows confidence.

Thus it will go on for some time. But the more the child observes, the more distinct are the impressions produced by the conduct of others.

It will therefore become possible even for a stranger, and one who is a stranger also to the mother, by a certain mode of conduct to gain the affection and the confidence of a child. To obtain them, the first requisite is constancy in the general conduct. It would appear scarcely credible, but it is strictly true, that children are not blind to, and that some children resent, the slightest deviation, for instance, from truth. In like manner, bad temper once indulged may go a great way to alienate the affection of the child, which can never be gained a second time by flatteries. This fact is certainly astonishing; and it may also be quoted

as evidence for the statement that there is in the infant a pure sense of the true and the right, which struggles against the constant temptation arising from the weakness of human nature to falsehood and depravity.

The child, then, begins to judge for himself not of things only but also of men; he acquires an idea of character; he grows more and more *morally independent*.

LETTER XXI

FEBRUARY 4, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

If education is understood to be the work not of a certain course of exercises resumed at stated times but of a continual and benevolent superintendence; if the importance of development is acknowledged not only in favor of the memory and the intellect and a few abilities which lead to indispensable attainments, but in favor of all the faculties, whatever may be their names, or nature, or energy, which Providence has implanted; its province, thus enlarged, will yet be with less difficulty surveyed from one point of view, and will have more of a systematic and truly philosophical character, than an incoherent mass of exercises, arranged without unity of principle, and gone through without interest,—which frequently, not very appropriately, receives the name of education.

We must bear in mind that the ultimate end of education is not perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but fitness for life; not the acquirement of habits of blind obedience and of prescribed diligence,

but a preparation for independent action. We must bear in mind that whatever class of society a pupil may belong to, whatever calling he may be intended for, there are certain faculties in human nature common to all, which constitute the stock of the fundamental energies of man. We have no right to withhold from any one the opportunities of developing all his faculties. It may be judicious to treat some of them with marked attention, and to give up the idea of bringing others to high perfection. The diversity of talent and inclination, of plans and pursuits, is a sufficient proof for the necessity of such a distinction. But I repeat that we have no right to shut out the child from the development of those faculties also which we may not for the present conceive to be very essential for his future calling or station in life.

Who is not acquainted with the vicissitudes of human fortune which have frequently rendered an attainment valuable that was little esteemed before, or led to regret the want of application to an exercise that had been treated with contempt? Who has not at some time or other experienced the delight of being able to benefit others by his advice or assistance, under circumstances when but for his interference they must have been deprived of that benefit? And who, even if in practice he is a stranger to it, would not at least in theory acknowledge that the greatest satisfaction

man can obtain is a consciousness that he is pre-eminently qualified to render himself useful ?

But even if all this were not deserving of attention ; if the sufficiency of ordinary acquirements for the great majority were vindicated on grounds perhaps of partial experience and of inference from well-known facts, I would still maintain that our systems of education have for the most part been laboring under this inconvenience, that they did not assign the due proportion to the different exercises proposed by them.

The only correct idea of this subject is to be derived from the examination of human nature with *all its faculties*. We do not find in the vegetable or the animal kingdom any species of objects gifted with certain qualities which are not in some stage of its existence called into play, and which do not contribute to the full development of the character of the species in the individual. Even in the mineral kingdom the wonders of Providence are incessantly manifested in the numberless combinations of crystallization ; and thus even in the lowest department of created things, as far as we are acquainted with them, a constant law, the means employed by Supreme Intelligence, decides upon the formation, the shape, and the individual character of a mineral, according to its inherent properties. Although the circumstances under which a mineral may have been formed or a plant may have grown or an animal

may have been brought up may influence and modify, yet they can never destroy that result which the combined agency of its natural energies or qualities will produce.

Thus education, instead of merely considering what is to be imparted to children, ought to consider first what they may be said already to possess, if not as a developed, at least as an involved faculty capable of development. Or if, instead of speaking thus in the abstract, we will but recollect that it is to the great Author of life that man owes the possession and is responsible for the use of his innate faculties, education should not only decide what is to be made of a child, but rather inquire, what is a child qualified for? what is his destiny, as a created and responsible being? what are his faculties as a rational and moral being? what are the means pointed out for their perfection and the end held out as the highest object of their efforts by the Almighty Father of all, both in the creation and in the page of revelation?

To these questions the answer must be simple and comprehensive. It must combine all mankind,—it must be applicable to all, without distinction of zones or nations in which they may be born. It must acknowledge in the first place the rights of man, in the fullest sense of the word. It must proceed to show that these rights, far from being confined to those ex-

terior advantages which have from time to time been secured by a successful struggle of the people, embrace a much higher privilege, the nature of which is not yet generally understood or appreciated. They embrace the rightful claims of all classes to a general diffusion of useful knowledge, a careful development of the intellect, and judicious attention to all the faculties of man, physical, intellectual, and moral.

It is in vain to talk of liberty, when man is unnerved, or his mind not stored with knowledge, or his judgment neglected; and above all, when he is left unconscious of his rights and his duties as a moral being.*

*“ We entertain a firm conviction, that the principles of liberty, as in government and trade, so also in education, are all-important to the happiness of mankind. To the triumph of those principles we look forward, not, we trust, with a fanatical confidence, but assuredly with a cheerful and steadfast hope. Their nature may be misunderstood; their progress may be retarded. They may be maligned, derided, nay, at times exploded, and apparently forgotten. But we do, in our souls, believe that they are strong with the strength, and quick with the vitality of truth; that when they fall, it is to rebound; that when they recede, it is to spring forward with greater elasticity; that when they seem to perish, there are the seeds of renovation in their very decay.”— *Edinburgh Review*, March, 1826.

LETTER XXII

FEBRUARY 10, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

If according to correct principles of education all the faculties of man are to be developed and all his slumbering energies called into play, the early attention of mothers must be directed to a subject which is generally considered to require neither much thought nor experience, and therefore is generally neglected. I mean the physical education of children.

Who has not a few general sentences at hand which he will be ready to quote, but perhaps not to practise, on the management of children? I am aware that much has been done away with that used to exercise the very worst influence on children. I am aware that the general management of them has become much more rational, and that their tasks and amusements have been much improved by a judicious attention to their wants and their faculties. But much still remains to be done; and we shall deserve little credit for a real wish to improve if we suffer ourselves to rest satisfied with the idea that all is not so bad as it might be or as it may have been.

The revival of gymnastics is in my opinion the most important step that has been done in that direction. The great merit of the gymnastic art is not the facility with which certain exercises are performed or the qualification which they may give for certain exertions that require much energy and dexterity; though an attainment of that sort is by no means to be despised.

But the greatest advantage resulting from a practice of those exercises is the natural progress which is observed in the arrangement of them, beginning with those which while they are easy in themselves yet lead as a preparatory practice to others which are more complicated and more difficult. There is not perhaps any art in which it may be so clearly shown that energies which appear to be wanting are to be produced, as it were, or at least are to be developed by no other means than practice alone.

This might afford a most useful hint to all those who are engaged in teaching any object of instruction, and who meet with difficulties in bringing their pupils to that proficiency which they had expected. Let them recommence on a new plan, in which the exercises shall be differently arranged and the subjects brought forward in a manner that will admit of the natural progress from the easier to the more difficult. When talent is wanting altogether, I know that it cannot be imparted by any system of education. But I have

been taught by experience to consider the cases in which talents of any kind are absolutely wanting but very few. And in most cases, I have had the satisfaction to find that a faculty which had been quite given over, instead of being developed had been rather obstructed in its agency by a variety of exercises which tend to perplex or to deter from further exertion.

And here I would attend to a prejudice which is common enough concerning the use of gymnastics: it is frequently said that they may be very good for those who are strong enough; but that those who are suffering from weakness of constitution would be altogether unequal to and even endangered by a practice of gymnastics.

Now I will venture to say that this rests merely upon a misunderstanding of the first principles of gymnastics: the exercises not only vary in proportion to the strength of individuals; but exercises may be and have been devised for those also who were decidedly suffering. And I have consulted the authority of the first physicians, who declare that in cases which had come under their personal observation individuals affected with pulmonary complaints, if these had not already proceeded too far, had been materially relieved and benefited by a constant practice of the few and simple exercises which the system in such cases proposes.

And for this very reason, that exercises may be de-

vised for every age and for every degree of bodily strength, however reduced, I consider it to be essential that mothers should make themselves acquainted with the principles of gymnastics, in order that among the elementary and preparatory exercises they may be able to select those which according to circumstances will be most likely to suit and benefit their children.

I do not mean to say that mothers should strictly adhere to those exercises only which they may find pointed out in a work on gymnastics; they may of course vary them as they find desirable or advisable; but I would recommend a mother much rather to consult one who has some experience in the management of gymnastics *with children*, before she decides upon altering the course proposed, or adopting other exercises of which she is unable to calculate the exact degree of strength which they may require or the benefit that her children may derive from them.

If the physical advantage of gymnastics is great and uncontrovertible, I would contend that the moral advantage resulting from them is as valuable. I would again appeal to your own observation. You have seen a number of schools in Germany and Switzerland of which gymnastics formed a leading feature; and I recollect that in our conversations on the subject you made the remark, which exactly agrees with my own experience, that gymnastics, well conducted, essentially

contributes not only to render children cheerful and healthy, which for moral education are two all-important points, but also to promote among them a certain spirit of union and brotherly feeling which is most gratifying to the observer: habits of industry, openness and frankness of character, personal courage, and a manly conduct in suffering pain, are also among the natural and constant consequences of an early and a continued practice of exercises on the gymnastic system.

LETTER XXIII

FEBRUARY 18, 1827.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Physical education ought by no means to be confined to those exercises which now receive the denomination of gymnastics. By means of them strength and dexterity will be acquired in the use of the limbs in general; but particular exercises ought to be devised for the practice of all the senses.

This idea may at first appear a superfluous refinement, or an unnecessary encumbrance of free development. We have acquired the full use of our senses, to be sure, without any special instruction of that sort: but the question is not whether these exercises are indispensable, but whether under any circumstances they will not prove useful.

How many are there of us whose eye would without any assistance judge correctly of a distance, or of the proportion of the size of different objects? How many are there who distinguish and recognize the nice shades of colors, without comparing the one with the other; or whose ear will be alive to the slightest variation of

sound? Those who are able to do this with some degree of perfection will be found to derive their facility either from a certain innate talent, or from constant and laborious practice. Now it is evident that there is a certain superiority in these attainments which natural talent gives without any exertion, and which instruction could never impart though attended by the most diligent application. But if practice cannot do everything, at least it can do much; and the earlier it is begun, the easier and the more perfect must be the success.

A regular system of exercises of this description is yet a desideratum. But it cannot be difficult for a mother to introduce into the amusements of her children a number of these exercises, calculated to develop and perfect the eye and the ear. For it is desirable that everything of that kind should be treated as an amusement, rather than as anything else. The greatest liberty must prevail, and the whole must be done with a certain cheerfulness, without which all these exercises, as gymnastics themselves, would become dull, pedantic, and ridiculous.

It will be well to connect these exercises very early with others tending to form the taste. It seems not to be sufficiently understood that good taste and good feelings are kindred to each other, and that they reciprocally confirm each other. Though the ancients

have said that "to study those arts which are suited to a free-born mind soothes the character and takes away the roughness of exterior manners," yet little has been done to open a free access to those enjoyments or accomplishments to all, and especially to the majority of the people. If they must not be expected to be able to give much of their attention to subordinate or ornamental pursuits, while so much of it is engrossed in providing for their first and necessary wants, still this does not furnish a conclusive reason why they should be shut out altogether from every pursuit above the toil of their ordinary vocations.

Yet I know not a more gratifying scene than to see, as I have seen among the poor, a mother spreading around her a spirit of silent but serene enjoyment, diffusing among her children a spring of better feelings, and setting the example of removing everything that might offend the taste, not indeed of a fastidious observer but yet of one used to move in another sphere. It is difficult to describe by what means this can be effected. But I have seen it under circumstances which did not promise to render it even possible.

Of one thing I am certain, that it is only through the true spirit of maternal love that it can be obtained. That feeling, of which I cannot too frequently repeat that it is capable of an elevation to the standard of the very best feelings of human nature, is intimately con-

nected with a happy instinct that will lead to a path equally as remote from listlessness and indolence as it is from artificial refinement. Refinement and fastidiousness may do much, if upheld by constant watchfulness; a nature, however, a truth will be wanting; and even the casual observer will be struck with a restraint incompatible with an atmosphere of sympathy.

Now that I am on the topic, I will not let the opportunity pass by without speaking of one of the most effective aids of moral education. You are aware that I mean *music*, and not only are you acquainted with my sentiments on that subject, but you have also observed the very satisfactory results which we have obtained in our schools. The exertions of my excellent friend Nageli, who has with equal taste and judgment reduced the highest principles of his art to the simplest elements, have enabled us to bring our children to a proficiency which on any other plan must be the work of much time and labor.

But it is not this proficiency which I would describe as a desirable accomplishment of education. It is the marked and most beneficial influence of music on the feelings, which I have always observed to be the most efficient in preparing, or as it were attuning, the mind for the best impressions. The exquisite harmony of a superior performance, the studied elegance of the execution, may indeed give satisfaction to a connois-

seur; but it is the simple and untaught grace of melody which speaks to the heart of every human being. Our own national melodies, which have since time immemorial been resounding in our native valleys, are fraught with reminiscences of the brightest page of our history and of the most endearing scenes of domestic life.

But the effect of music in education is not only to keep alive a national feeling: it goes much deeper; if cultivated in the right spirit it strikes at the root of every bad or narrow feeling, of every ungenerous or mean propensity, of every emotion unworthy of humanity.

In saying so I might quote an authority which commands our attention on account of the elevated character and genius of the man from whom it proceeds. It is well-known, that there was not a more eloquent and warm advocate of the moral virtues of music than the venerable Luther. But though his voice has made itself heard and is still held in the highest esteem among us, yet experience has spoken still louder and more unquestionably to the truth of the proposition which he was among the first to vindicate. Experience has long since proved that a system proceeding upon the principle of sympathy would be imperfect if it were to deny itself the assistance of that powerful means of the culture of the heart. Those schools or those families in which [music] has retained the cheerful and

chaste character which it is so important that it should preserve have invariably displayed scenes of moral feeling and consequently of happiness which leave no doubt as to the intrinsic value of that art, which has sunk into neglect or degenerated into abuse only in the ages of barbarism or depravity.

I need not remind you of the importance of music in engendering and assisting the highest feelings of which man is capable. It is almost universally acknowledged that Luther saw the truth when he pointed to music, devoid of studied pomp and vain ornament, in its solemn and impressive simplicity, as one of the most efficient means of elevating and purifying genuine feelings of devotion.

We have frequently in our conversations on this subject been at a loss how to account for the circumstance that in your own country, though that fact is as generally acknowledged, yet music does not form a more prominent feature in general education. It would seem that the notion prevails that it would require more time and application than can conveniently be bestowed upon it, to make its influence extend also on the education of the people.

Now I would appeal with the same confidence as I would to yourself to any traveller, whether he has not been struck with the facility as well as the success with which it is cultivated among us. Indeed there is

scarcely a village school throughout Switzerland, and perhaps there is none throughout Germany or Prussia, in which something is not done for an acquirement of at least the elements of music on the new and more appropriate plan.

This is a fact which it cannot be difficult to examine, and which it will be impossible to dispute; and I will conclude this letter by expressing the hope which we have been entertaining together, that *this fact will not be overlooked in a country which has never been backward in suggesting or adopting improvement when founded on facts, and confirmed by experience.*

LETTER XXIV

FEBRUARY 27, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

In the branch of education of which I have been treating in the two last letters, I conceive that to the elements of music should be subjoined the elements of drawing.

We all know from experience that among the first manifestations of the faculties of a child are a desire and an attempt of imitation. This accounts for the acquirement of language, and for the first imperfect utterance of sounds imitative of music which is common to most children when they have heard a tune with which they were pleased. The progress in both depends on the greater or smaller portion of attention which children give to the things that surround them, and on their quickness of perception. In the very same way as this applies to the ear and the organs of speech, it applies also to the eye and the employment of the hand. Children who evince some curiosity in the objects brought before their eyes very soon begin to employ their ingenuity and skill in copying what

they have seen. Most children will manage to construct something in imitation of a building, of any materials they can lay hold of.

This desire, which is natural to them, should not be neglected. It is like all the faculties capable of regular development. It is therefore well done to furnish children with playthings which will facilitate these their first essays, and occasionally to assist them. No encouragement of that sort is lost upon them; and encouragement should never be withheld when it promotes innocent pleasure and when it may lead to useful occupation. To relieve them from the monotonousness of their daily and hourly repeated trifles, and to introduce variety into their little amusements, acts as a stimulus to their ingenuity and sharpens their observation while it gains their interest.

As soon as they are able to make the attempt there is nothing so well calculated for this object as some elementary practice of drawing.

You have seen the course of preparatory exercises by which some of my friends have so well succeeded in facilitating these pursuits for quite young children. It would be unreasonable to expect that they should begin by drawing any object before them as a whole. It is necessary to analyze for them the parts and elements of which it consists. Whenever this has been attempted the progress has been astonishing, and

equalled only by the delight with which the children followed this their favorite pursuit. My friends Ramsauer and Boniface* have undertaken the very useful work of arranging such a course in its natural progress from the easiest to the most complicated exercises; and the number of schools in which their method has been successfully practised confirms the experience which we have made at Yverdun of its merits.

The general advantages resulting from an early practice of drawing are evident to every one. Those who are familiar with the art are known to look upon almost every object with eyes different as it were from a common observer. One who is in the habit of examining the structure of plants and conversant with a system of botany will discover a number of distinguishing characteristics of a flower, for instance, which remain wholly unnoticed by one unacquainted with that science.

* Both these gentlemen have since published several works, the first in German, and the second in French, with illustrations. Their principles, which were first applied in the Pestalozzian schools, are now very generally adopted in the best schools of Germany and France; and their works, especially that of Ramsauer, would well deserve a translation into English. The superiority of their method has been generally acknowledged by the Englishmen who have seen it practised in the Pestalozzian institutions.

It is from the same reason that even in common life a person who is in the habit of drawing, especially from Nature, will easily perceive many circumstances which are commonly overlooked, and form a much more correct impression even of such objects as he does not stop to examine minutely, than one who has never been taught to look upon what he sees with an intention to reproduce a likeness of it. The attention to the exact shape of the whole and the proportion of the parts which is requisite for the taking of an adequate sketch is converted into a habit, and becomes in many cases productive of much instruction and amusement.

In order to attain this habit, it is material and almost indispensable that children should not be confined to copying from another drawing, but permitted to sketch from Nature. The impression which the object itself gives is so much more striking than its appearance in an imitation that it gives a child much more pleasure to exercise his skill in attempting a likeness of what surrounds him and of what he is interested in, than to labor at a copy of what is but a copy itself, and has less of life or interest in its appearance.

It is likewise much easier to give an idea of the important subject of light and shade and of the first principles of perspective, as far as they influence the representation of every object, by placing it immediately before the eye. The assistance which is given

should by no means extend to a direction in the execution of every detail; but something should be left to the ingenuity, something also to patience and perseverance: an advantage that has been found out after some fruitless attempts is not easily forgotten; it gives much satisfaction and encouragement to new efforts; and the joy at the ultimate success derives a zest from previous disappointment.

Next to the exercises of drawing come those of modelling, in whatever materials may be most conveniently employed. This is frequently productive of even more amusement. Even where there is no distinguished mechanical talent, the pleasure of being able to do something at least is with many a sufficient excitement: and both drawing and modelling, if taught on principles which are founded in nature, will be of the greatest use when the pupils are to enter upon other branches of instruction.

Of these I shall here only mention two—geometry and geography. The preparatory exercises by which we have introduced a course of geometry present an analysis of the various combinations under which the elements of form are brought together, and of which every figure or diagram consists. These elements are already familiar to the pupil who has been taught to consider an object with a view to decompose it into its original parts and to draw them separately. The pupil

of course will not be a stranger to the materials of which he is now to be taught the combinations and proportions. It must be easier to understand the properties of a circle, for instance, or of a square, for one who not only has met with these figures occasionally, but is already acquainted with the manner in which they are formed. Besides, the doctrine of geometrical solids, which cannot in any degree be satisfactorily taught without illustrative models, is much better understood and much deeper impressed on the mind when the pupils have some idea of the construction of the models, and when they are able to work out at least those which are less complicated.

In geography, the drawing of outline maps is an exercise which ought not to be neglected in any school. It gives the most accurate idea of the proportional extent and the general position of the different countries; it conveys a more distinct notion than any description, and it leaves the most permanent impression on the memory.

LETTER XXV

MARCH 5, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

To the courses of exercises which I have recommended, I anticipate that an objection will be raised which it is necessary for me to meet before I proceed to speak of intellectual education.

Granting that these exercises may be as the phrase is useful in their way; granting even that it might be desirable to see some of the knowledge they are intended to convey diffused among all classes of society; yet where, it will be asked, and by what means can they be expected to become general among any other than the higher classes? There you may expect to find mothers competent, if at all inclined, to undertake the superintendence of such exercises with their children. But considering the present state of things is it not absolutely chimerical to imagine that among the people mothers should be found who are qualified to do anything for their children in that direction?

To this objection I would answer in the first place that it is not always legitimate to conclude from the

present state of things to the future; and whenever as in the case before us the present state of things can be proved to be faulty and at the same time capable of improvement, every friend of humanity will concur with me in saying that such a conclusion is inadmissible.

It is inadmissible; for experience speaks against it. The page of history to a thinking observer presents mankind laboring under the influence of a chain of prejudice of which the links are successively broken.

The most interesting events in history are but the consummation of things which had been deemed impossible. It is in vain to assign limits to the improvements of ingenuity; *but it is still more so to circumscribe the exertions of benevolence.*

Such a conclusion then is inadmissible. And history speaks more directly to the point. The most consequential facts plead in favor of our wishes and our hopes. The most enlightened, the most active philanthropists, two thousand years ago, could not have foreseen the change that has taken place in the intellectual world: they could not have anticipated those facilities by which not only is the research of a few encouraged, but the practical results of that research are with wonderful rapidity communicated to thousands in the remotest countries of the globe. They could not have foreseen the glorious invention by which ignorance and

superstition have been driven out of their stronghold, and knowledge and truth diffused in the most universal and the most effective channels. They could not have foreseen that a spirit of inquiry would be excited even among those who had formerly been doomed to blind belief and to passive obedience.

Indeed, if there is one feature by which this present age bids fair to redeem its character and to heal the wounds which it has inflicted on the suffering nations it is this,—that we see efforts making in every direction with a zeal and to an extent hitherto unparalleled to assist the people in acquiring that portion of intellectual independence without which the true dignity of the human character cannot be maintained nor its duties adequately fulfilled. There is something so cheering in the prospect of seeing the number of those for whom it is destined extending with the range of knowledge itself, that there is scarcely a field left of which men of superior talent have not undertaken to cull the flowers and to store the fruits for those who have not time or faculty to toil at the elements or follow up the refinements of science; and the still more material object, to facilitate the first steps, to lay the foundation, to ensure the slow but solid progress, and to do this in the manner best adapted to the nature of the human mind, and to the development of its faculties:—this object has been pursued with an interest

and an ardor that even the results which I have seen in my own immediate neighborhood are a sufficient pledge that the pursuit will not be abandoned, and that it is now not far from its ultimate success.

This prospect is cheering: but, my dear friend, it is not upon this prospect that I have built the hopes of my life. It is not the diffusion of knowledge, whether it be grudgingly doled out in schools on the old plan, or more liberally supplied in establishments on a new principle, or submitted to the examination, and laid open for the improvement of the adults;—it is not the diffusion of knowledge alone to which I look up for the welfare of this or any generation. No: unless we succeed in giving a new impulse, and raising the tone of *Domestic Education*; unless an atmosphere of sympathy, elevated by moral and religious feeling, be diffused there; unless maternal love be rendered more instrumental in early education than any other agent; unless mothers will consent to follow the call of their own better feelings more readily than those of pleasure or of thoughtless habit; unless they will consent to be mothers, and to act as mothers—unless such be the character of education, all our hopes and exertions can end only in disappointment.

Those have indeed widely mistaken the meaning of all my plans and of those of my friends who suppose that in our labors for popular education we have not a

higher end in view than the improvement of a system of instruction, or the perfection as it were of the gymnastics of the intellect. We have been busily engaged in reforming the schools, for we consider them as essential in the progress of education: but we consider the fireside circle as far more essential. We have done all in our power to bring up children with a view to become teachers, and we have every reason to congratulate the schools that were benefited by this plan: but we have thought it the most important feature and the first duty of our own schools and of every school, to develop in the pupils confided to our care those feelings and to store their minds with that knowledge which, at a more advanced period of life, may enable them to give all their heart and the unwearied use of their powers to the diffusion of the true spirit which should prevail in a domestic circle. In short, whoever has the welfare of the rising generation at heart cannot do better than consider as his highest object the *Education of Mothers*.

LETTER XXVI

MARCH 15, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Let me repeat that we cannot expect any real improvement in education that shall be felt throughout an extensive sphere and that shall continue to spread in the progress of time, increasing in vigor as it proceeds, unless we begin by *educating mothers*.

It is their duty in the domestic circle to do what school instruction has not the means of accomplishing; to give to every individual child that degree of attention which in a school is absorbed in the management of the whole; to let their heart speak in cases where the heart is the best judge; to gain by affection what authority could never have commanded.

But it is their duty also to turn all the stock of their knowledge to account, and to let their children have the benefit of it.

I am aware that under the present circumstances many mothers would either declare themselves or would be looked upon by others as incompetent to attempt any such thing; as so poor in knowledge and so un-

practised in communicating knowledge that such an undertaking on their part would appear as vain and presumptuous.

Now this is a fact, which, as far as experience goes, I am bound to deny. I am not now speaking of those classes or individuals whose education has been if not very diligently at least in some measure attended to. I have now in view a mother whose education has from some circumstances or other been totally neglected. I will suppose one who is even ignorant of reading and writing, though in no country in which the schools are in a proper state would you meet with an individual deficient in this respect. I will add, a young and unexperienced mother.

Now I will venture to say that this poor and wholly ignorant, this young and inexperienced mother, is *not quite destitute* of the means of assisting even in the intellectual development of her child.

However small may be the stock of her experience, however moderate her own faculties, she must be aware that she is acquainted with an infinite number of facts, such we will say as they occur in common life, to which her infant is yet a stranger. She must be aware that it will be useful to the infant to become soon acquainted with some of them, such for instance as refer to things with which it is likely to come into contact. She must feel herself able to give her child the

possession of a variety of names, simply by bringing the objects themselves before the child, pronouncing the names, and making the child repeat them. She must feel herself able to bring such objects before the child in a sort of natural order—the different parts for instance of a fruit. Let no one despise these things because they are little. There was a time when we were ignorant even of the least of them; and there are those to whom we have reason to be thankful for teaching us these little things.

But I do not mean to say that a mother should stop there. Even the mother of whom we are speaking, that wholly ignorant and inexperienced mother, is capable of going much farther, and of adding a variety of knowledge which is really useful. After she has exhausted the stock of objects which presented themselves first, after the child has acquired the names of them, and is able to distinguish their parts, it may probably occur to her that something more might still be said on every one of these objects. She will find herself able to describe them to the child with regard to form, size, color, softness or hardness of the outside, sound when touched, and so on.

She has now gained a material point; from the mere knowledge of the names of objects, she has led the infant to a knowledge of their qualities and properties. Nothing can be more natural for her than to go on and

compare different objects with regard to these qualities, and the greater or smaller degree in which they belong to the objects. If the former exercises were adapted to cultivate the memory, these are calculated to form the observation and judgment.

She may still go much farther: she is able to tell her child the reasons of things, and the causes of facts. She is able to inform it of the origin and the duration and the consequences of a variety of objects. The occurrences of every day and of every hour will furnish her with materials for this sort of instruction. Its use is evident; it teaches the child to inquire after the causes, and accustoms it to think of the consequences of things.

I shall have an opportunity in another place to speak of moral and religious instruction; I will therefore only remark in a few words that this last-mentioned class of exercises, which may be varied and extended in an almost endless series, will give frequent occasion for the simplest illustration of truths belonging to that branch. It will make the child reflect on the consequences of actions; it will render the mind familiar with thought; and it will frequently lead to recognize in the objects before the child the effects of the infinite wisdom of that Being whom long before the piety of the mother if genuine must have led him to revere and to love “with all his heart, and with all

his soul, and with all his strength, and with all his mind.”

I am afraid that the enumeration of these first essays of a mother will be found tedious by other readers than yourself, whom I have never seen weary of watching nature and drawing instruction from the inexhaustible spring of experience. I think that we sympathize on this subject; that we feel greater interest in the unsophisticated consciousness of a pure intention than in the most splendid exhibition of refinement of knowledge.

And I know not a motive which might render those efforts more interesting than the desire of a mother to do all in her power for the mental as well as the physical and moral development of her children. However circumscribed her means, and however limited at first may be her success, still there is something that will and must prompt her not to rest, that will stimulate her to new efforts, and that will at last crown them with fruits which are the more gratifying, the more they were difficult to obtain.

Experience has shown that mothers in that seemingly forlorn situation which I have described have succeeded beyond their own expectation. I look upon this as a new proof of the fact that nothing is too difficult for maternal love, animated by a consciousness of its purity, and elevated by a confidence in the power of

Him who has inspired the mother's heart with that feeling. I do indeed consider it as a free gift of the Creator, and I firmly believe that in the same measure as maternal love is ardent and indefatigable, in the same measure as it is inspired with energy and enhanced by faith,—I firmly believe that in the same measure maternal love will be strengthened in its exertions, and supplied with means, even where it appears most destitute.

Though, as I have shown above, it is by no means so difficult to direct the attention of children to useful objects, yet nothing is more common than the complaint, "I can do nothing with children." If this comes from an individual who is not called upon by his peculiar situation to occupy himself with education, it is but fair to suppose that he will be able to make himself more useful in another direction than he could have done by a laborious and persevering application to a task for which he is neither predisposed by inclination nor fitted by eminent talent. But those words should never come from a mother. A mother *is* called upon to give her attention to that subject. It is her duty to do so; the voice of conscience in her own breast will tell her that it is. The consciousness of a duty never exists without the qualification to fulfil it; nor has a duty ever been undertaken with the spirit of courage, of confidence, of love, that has not been ultimately crowned with success.

LETTER XXVII

MARCH 20, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

If even an uneducated and totally unassisted mother has it in her power to do so much for her child, how much better qualified must she be, and how much more confidently may she look forward to the results of her maternal exertions, if her faculties have been properly developed, and her steps guided by the experience of those who had engaged in that work before her.

The fact therefore which I stated in my last letter, far from rendering my proposition questionable, goes directly to confirm its validity and to illustrate its expediency. I therefore repeat it, and I would address it in the strongest language to all those who like myself are desirous of bringing about a change in our present insufficient system of education. If you really wish to embark with your facilities, your time, your talents, your influence, in a cause likely to benefit a large portion of your species—if you wish not to be busy in suggesting palliatives but in effecting a per-

manent cure of the evils under which thousands have sunk and hundreds of thousands are still suffering; if you wish not merely to erect an edifice that may attract by its splendor and commemorate your name for a while, but which shall pass away like “the baseless fabric of vision”; but if on the contrary you prefer solid improvement to momentary effect, and the lasting benefit of many to the solitary gratification of striking results; let not your attention be diverted by the apparent wants—let it not be totally engrossed by the subordinate ones—but let it at once be directed to the great and general though little known source from which good or evil flows in quantity incalculable and rapidity unparalleled—to the manner in which the earliest years of childhood are passed, and to the education of those to whose care they are or ought to be consigned.

Of all institutions, the most useful is one in which the great business of education is not merely made a means subservient to the various purposes of ordinary life, but in which it is viewed as an object in itself deserving of the most serious attention and to be brought to the highest perfection; a school in which the pupils are taught to act as teachers and educated to act as educators; a school, above all, in which the *female character* is at an early period developed in that direction

which enables it to take so prominent a part in early education.

To effect this it is necessary that the female character should be thoroughly understood and adequately appreciated. And on this subject nothing can give a more satisfactory illustration than the observation of a mother who is conscious of her duties and qualified to fulfil them. In such a mother the moral dignity of her character, the suavity of her manners, and the firmness of her principles will not more command our admiration, than the happy mixture of judgment and feeling which constitutes the simple but unerring standard of her actions.

It is the great problem in female education to effect this happy union in the mind, which is equally as far from imposing any restraint on the feelings as it is from warping or biasing the judgment. The marked preponderance of feeling which is manifested in the female character requires not only the most clear-sighted but also the kindest attention from those who wish to bring it into harmony with the development of the faculties of the intellect and the will.

It is a mere prejudice to suppose that the acquirement of knowledge and the cultivation of the intellect, must either not be solid and comprehensive, or must take away from the female character its simplicity and all that renders it truly amiable. Every thing

depends on the motive from which and the spirit in which knowledge is acquired. Let that motive be one that does honor to human nature, and let that spirit be the same which is concomitant to all the graces of the female character,—

“Not obvious, not obtrusive,—but retired,”—

and there will be modesty to ensure solidity of knowledge, and delicacy to guard against the misdirection of sentiment.

For an example, I might refer to one of the numerous instances which are not the less striking because they are not extensively known, in which a mother has devoted much of her time and best abilities to the acquirement of some branches of knowledge in which her own education had been defective, but which she conceived to be valuable enough to be brought forward in the education of her own children. This has been the case with individuals highly accomplished in many respects, but still alive to every defect and desirous of supplying it, if not for their own at least for the benefit of their children.

And no mother has ever been known to have repented of any pains that she took to qualify herself for the most perfect education of those nearest and dearest to her heart. Even without anticipating the future accomplishment of her wishes by their progress in which she has undertaken to guide them she is amply

repaid by the delight immediately arising from the task,

—————“to rear the tender thought,
And teach the young idea how to shoot.”

I have here supposed the most powerful motive, that of maternal love; but it will be the task of early education to supply motives which even at a tender age may excite an interest in mental exertion, and yet be allied to the best feelings of human nature.

LETTER XXVIII

MARCH 27, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

If a mother is desirous of taking an active part in the intellectual education of her children, I would first direct her attention to the necessity of considering, not only what sort of knowledge, but in what manner that knowledge should be communicated to the infant mind. For her purpose the latter consideration is even more essential than the former; for, however excellent the information may be which she wishes to impart, it will depend on the mode of her doing it whether it will at all gain access to the mind, or whether it will remain unprofitable, neither suiting the faculties nor being apt to excite the interest of the child.

In this respect a mother should be able perfectly to distinguish between the mere action of the memory and that of the other faculties of the mind.

To the want of this distinction I think we may safely ascribe much of the waste of time and the deceptive exhibition of apparent knowledge which is so frequent

in schools, both of a higher and a lower character. It is a mere fallacy to conclude or to pretend that knowledge has been acquired, from the circumstance that terms have been committed to the memory which, if rightly understood, convey the expression of knowledge. This condition, *if rightly understood*, which is the most material is the most generally overlooked. No doubt a proceeding of this sort, when words are committed to the memory without an adequate explanation being either given or required is the most commodious evidence for the indolence or ignorance of those who practise upon it as a system of instruction. Add to which the powerful stimulus of vanity in the pupils,—the hope of distinction and reward in some,—the fear of exposure or punishment in others,—and we shall have the principal motives before us owing to which this system in spite of its wretchedness has so long been patronized by those who do not think at all, and tolerated by those who do not sufficiently think for themselves.

What I have said just now of the exercise of the memory exclusive of a well-regulated exercise of the understanding, applies more especially to the manner in which the dead languages have long been and in some places still are taught; a system of which, taking it all in all, with its abstruse and unintelligible rules and its compulsive discipline, it is difficult to say

whether it is more absurd in an intellectual, or more detestable in a moral point of view.*

If such a system, enforcing the partial exercise of the memory, is so absurd in its application and so detrimental in its consequences, at a period when the intellect may be supposed to be able to make some progress at least without being so constantly and anxiously attended to, an exclusive cultivation of the memory must be still more misapplied at the tender age when the intellect is only just dawning, when the faculty of discerning is yet unformed and unable to consign to the memory the notions of separate objects in their dis-

* “The boasted liberty we talk of, is but a mean reward for the long servitude, the many heart-aches and terrors to which our childhood is exposed in going through a grammar school.”—*Spectator*, Vol. II., No. 157.

On this subject, see *Locke On Education*, § 163–177.

“In teaching a language it is the universal practice to begin with grammar, and to do everything by rule. I affirm this to be a most perposterous method. Grammar is contrived for men, not for children. Its natural place is between language and logic: it ought to close lectures on the former, and to be the first lectures on the latter. It is a gross deception, that a language cannot be taught without rules. A boy who is flogged into grammar rules, makes a shift to apply them; but he applies them by rote like a parrot. Boys, for the

inction from each other. For a mother to guard against an error of this kind the first rule is to teach always by *things* rather than by *words*. Let there be as few objects as possible named to the infant unless you are prepared to show the objects themselves. When you can show the object the name will be committed to the memory, together with the recollection of the impression which the object produced on the senses. It is an old saying, and a very true one, that our attention is much more forcibly attracted and more permanently fixed by objects which have been brought before our eyes than by others of which we have merely gath-

knowledge they acquire of a language, are not indebted to dry rules, but to practice and observation. *To this day I never think without shuddering of Disputer's grammar, which was my daily persecution during the most important period of life.* Curiosity, when I was farther advanced in years, prompted me to look at a book that had given me so much trouble. At this time I understood the rules perfectly; and was astonished that formerly they had been to us *words without meaning*, which I had been taught to apply mechanically, without knowing how or why. Deplorable it is, that young creatures should be so punished without being guilty of any fault—more than sufficient to produce a disgust at learning, instead of promoting it. Whence then this absurdity of persecuting boys with grammar rules? ” etc.—*Loose Hints on Education*, p. 279.

ered some notion from hearsay and description or from the mention of a name.

But if a mother is to teach by *things*, she must recollect also that to the formation of an idea more is requisite than the bringing the object before the senses. Its qualities must be explained; its origin must be accounted for; its parts must be described, and their relation to the whole ascertained; its use, its effects or consequences, must be stated. All this must be done in a manner at least sufficiently clear and comprehensive to enable the child to distinguish the object from other objects and to account for the distinction which is made.

It is natural that the degree of perfection with which the formation of ideas on this plan can be facilitated depends upon circumstances which are not always under the control of a mother; but something of the kind should be attempted and must be, wherever education is intended to take a higher character than mere mechanical training of the memory.

Of objects which cannot be brought before the child in reality, pictures should be introduced. Instruction founded on pictures will always be found a favorite branch with children, and if this curiosity is well directed and judiciously satisfied it will prove one of the most useful and instructive.

Whenever the knowledge of an abstract idea, which

will not of course admit of any representation of that kind, is to be communicated to the child, on the same principle an equivalent of that representation should be given by an exemplification through the medium of a fact laid before the child. This is the original intention and the use of moral tales; and, this, too, agrees with the excellent old adage, "The way by precept is long and laborious, that by example short and easy."

LETTER XXIX

APRIL 4, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

The second rule that I would give to a mother, respecting the early development of the infant mind is this: Let the child not only be *acted upon* but let him be an *agent* in intellectual education.

I shall explain my meaning. Let the mother bear in mind that her child has not only the faculties of attention to and retention of certain ideas or facts, but also a faculty of reflection, independent of the thoughts of others. It is well done to make a child read, and write, and learn, and repeat,—but it is still better to make a child *think*. We may be able to turn to account the opinions of others, and we may find it valuable or advantageous to be acquainted with them: we may profit by their light; but we can render ourselves most useful to others and we shall be most entitled to the character of valuable members of society by the efforts of our own minds; by the result of our own investigations; by those views and their application which we may call our own intellectual property.

I am not now speaking of those leading ideas which are from time to time thrown out, and by which science is advanced or society benefited at large. I am speaking of that stock of intellectual property which every one may acquire, even the most unpretending individual and in the humblest walks of life. I am speaking of that habit of reflection which guards against unthinking conduct under any circumstances, and which is always active to examine that which is brought before the mind; that habit of reflection which excludes the self-sufficiency of ignorance or the levity of "a little learning";—which may lead an individual to the modest acknowledgement that he knows but little, and to the honest consciousness that he knows that little well. To engender this habit, nothing is so effective as an early development in the infant mind of thought,—regular, self-active thought.

Let not the mother suffer herself to be detained from this task by the objections of those who deem the infant mind altogether incapable of any exertion of that kind. I will venture to say that those who propose that objection, though they may be the profoundest thinkers or the greatest theorists, will be found to have no *practical* knowledge whatsoever of the subject nor any moral interest in the investigation of it. And I, for one, would trust more in the experimental knowledge of a mother, proceeding from exertions to which she was

prompted by maternal feeling—in that experimental knowledge, even of an illiterate mother, I would trust more than in the theoretical speculations of the most ingenious philosophers. There are cases in which sound sense and a warm heart see farther than a highly refined, cold, and calculating head.

I would therefore call upon the mother to begin her task, in spite of any objections that may be raised. It will be enough if she is persuaded to *begin*; she will then continue of herself; she will derive such gratification from her task that she will never think of relaxing.

While she unfolds the treasures of the infant mind and uncloses the world of hitherto slumbering thought, she will not envy the assurance of philosophers who would have the human mind to be a “universal blank”. Engaged in a task which calls into activity all the energies of her mind and all the affections of her heart, she will smile at their dictatorial speculations and their supercilious theories. Without troubling herself about the knotty question whether there are any *innate ideas*, she will be content if she succeeds in developing the *innate faculties of the mind*.

If a mother asks for the designation of the subjects which might be profitably used as vehicles for the development of thought, I would answer her that any subject will do if it be treated in a manner suitable to

the faculties of the child. It is the great art in teaching, never to be at a loss for the choice of an object for the illustration of a truth. There is not an object so trivial that in the hands of a skilful teacher it might not become interesting, if not from its own nature, at least from the mode of treating it. To a child everything is new. The charm of novelty, it is true, soon wears off; and if there is not the fastidiousness of matured years there is at least the impatience of infancy to contend with. But then there is for the teacher the great advantage of a combination of simple elements, which may diversify the subject without dividing the attention.

If I say that any subject will do for the purpose, I mean this to be understood literally. Not only there is not one of the little incidents in the life of a child, in his amusements and recreations, in his relations to his parents and friends and playfellows,—but there is not actually anything within the reach of the child's attention, whether it belong to nature or to the employments and arts of life, that might not be made the object of a lesson by which some useful knowledge might be imparted, and, which is still more important, by which the child might not be familiarized with the habit of thinking on what he sees and speaking after he has thought.

The mode of doing this is not by any means to talk

much *to* a child, but to enter into conversation *with* a child; not to address to him many words, however familiar or well chosen, but to bring him to express himself on the subject; not to exhaust the subject, but to question the child about it, and to let him find out and correct the answers. It would be ridiculous to expect that the volatile spirits of an infant could be brought to follow any lengthy explanations. The attention of a child is deadened by long expositions but roused by animated questions.

Let these questions be short, clear, and intelligible. Let them not merely lead the child to repeat in the same or in varied terms what he has heard just before. Let them excite him to observe what is before him, to recollect what he has learned, and to muster his little stock of knowledge for materials for an answer. Show him a certain quality in one thing, and let him find out the same in others. Tell him that the shape of a ball is called round; and if, accordingly, you bring him to point out other objects to which the same character belongs you have employed him more usefully than by the most perfect discourse on rotundity. In the one instance he would have had to listen and to recollect; in the other he has to observe and to think.

LETTER XXX

APRIL 10, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

When I recommend to a mother to avoid *wearying* a child by her instructions, I do not wish to encourage the notion that instruction should always take the character of an amusement or even of play. I am convinced that such a notion where it is entertained and acted upon by a teacher will forever preclude solidity of knowledge, and from a want of sufficient exertion on the part of the pupils will lead to that very result which I wish to avoid by my principle of a constant employment of the thinking powers.

A child must very early in life be taught a lesson which frequently comes too late and is then a most painful one,—that exertion is indispensable for the attainment of knowledge. But a child should not be taught to look upon exertion as an unavoidable *evil*. The motive of *fear* should not be made a stimulus to exertion. It will destroy the interest and will speedily create disgust.

This *interest* in study is the first thing which a teacher,

and in the instances before us, which a mother should endeavor to excite and keep alive. There are scarcely any circumstances in which a want of application in children does not proceed from a want of interest; and there are perhaps none under which a want of interest does not originate in the mode of treating adopted by the teacher. I would go so far as to lay it down for a rule that whenever children are inattentive and apparently take no interest in a lesson, the teacher should always first look to himself for the reason. When a quantity of dry matter is before a child, when a child is doomed to listen in silence to lengthy explanations or to go through exercises which have nothing in themselves to relieve or attract the mind, this is a tax upon his spirits which a teacher should make it a point to abstain from imposing. In the same manner if the child from the imperfection of his reasoning powers or his unacquaintance with facts is unable to enter into the sense or to follow the chain of ideas in a lesson, when he is made to hear or to repeat what to him is but "sound without sense"—this is perfectly absurd. And when to all this the fear of punishment is added,—besides the tedium, which in itself is punishment enough,—this becomes absolutely cruel.

Of all tyrants, it is well known that little tyrants are the most cruel; and of all little tyrants the most cruel are *school tyrants*. Now in all civilized countries

cruelty of every description is forbidden, and even cruelty to animals is properly punished, in some by the law of the land, and in all stigmatised by public opinion. How then comes *cruelty to children* to be so generally overlooked, or rather thought a matter of course?

Some, forsooth, will tell us that their own measures are wonderfully humane,—that their punishments are less severe,—or that they have done away with corporal punishments. But it is not to the severity of them that I object—nor would I venture to assert in an unqualified manner that corporal punishments are inadmissible under any circumstances in education. But I do object to their application—I do object to the principle *that the children are punished when the master or the system is to blame.*

As long as this shall continue,—as long as teachers will not take the trouble or will not be found qualified to inspire their pupils with a living interest in their studies—they must not complain of the want of attention nor even of the aversion to instruction which some of them may manifest. Could we witness the indescribable tedium which must oppress the juvenile mind while the weary hours are slowly passing away, one by one, in an occupation which they can neither relish nor understand its use; could we remember the same scenes which our own childhood has undergone,

we should then no longer be surprised at the remissness of the school-boy, “creeping, like snail, unwillingly to school”.

In saying this I do not mean to make myself the advocate of idleness or of those irregularities which will now and then be met with even in the best conducted schools. But I would suggest that the best means to prevent them from becoming general is to adopt a better mode of instruction, by which the children are less left to themselves, less thrown upon the unwelcome employment of passive listening, less harshly treated for little and excusable failings,—but more roused by questions, animated by illustrations, interested and won by kindness.

There is a most remarkable reciprocal action between the interest which the teacher takes and that which he communicates to his pupils. If he is not with his whole mind present at the subject; if he does not care whether it is understood or not, whether his manner is liked or not, he will never fail of alienating the affections of his pupils, and of rendering them indifferent to what he says. But real interest taken in the task of instruction—kind words, and kinder feelings—the very expression of the features, and the glance of the eye,—are never lost upon children.

LETTER XXXI

APRIL 17, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

You are aware of the nature of those exercises which were adopted at my suggestion as calculated to employ the mind usefully and to prepare it for further pursuits by eliciting thought and forming the intellect.

I would call them preparatory exercises in more than one respect. They embrace the elements of number, form, and language; and whatever ideas we may have to acquire in the course of our life, they are all introduced through the medium of one of these three departments.

The relations and proportions of number and form constitute the natural measure of all those impressions which the mind receives without. They are the measures of and comprehend the qualities of the material world, form being the measure of space, and number the measure of time. Two or more objects distinguished from each other as existing separately in space, pre-suppose an idea of their forms, or in other words, of the exact space which they occupy; distinguished

from each other as existing at different times, they come under the denomination of number.

The reason why I would so early call the attention of children to the elements of number and form is, besides their general usefulness, that they admit of a most perspicuous treatment—a treatment of course far different from that in which they are but too often involved, and rendered utterly unpalatable to those who are by no means deficient in abilities.

The elements of number, or preparatory exercises of Calculation, should always be taught by submitting to the eye of the child certain objects representing the units. A child can conceive the idea of two balls, two roses, two books; but it cannot conceive the idea of “Two” in the abstract. How would you make the child understand that two and two make four, unless you show it to him first in reality? To begin by abstract notions is absurd and detrimental, instead of being educative. The result is at best that the child can do the thing by rote without understanding it; a fact which does not reflect on the child but on the teacher, who knows not a higher character of instruction than mere mechanical training.

If the elements are thus clearly and intelligibly taught, it will always be easy to go on to more difficult parts, remembering always that the whole should be done by *questions*. As soon as you have given to the

child a knowledge of the names by which the numbers are distinguished, you may appeal to it to answer any question of simple addition or subtraction or multiplication or division, performing the operation in reality by means of a certain number of objects, balls for instance, which will serve in the place of units.

It has been objected that children who had been used to a constant and palpable exemplification of the units by which they were enabled to execute the solution of arithmetical questions, would never be able afterwards to follow the problems of calculation in the abstract, their balls or other representatives being taken from them.

Now experience has shown that those very children who had acquired the first elements in the palpable and familiar method described had two great advantages over others. First, they were perfectly aware not only of what they were doing but also of the reason why. They were acquainted with the principle on which the solution depended; they were not merely following a formula by rote; the state of the question changed they were not puzzled, as those are who see only as far as their mechanical rule goes and not farther. This, while it produced confidence and a feeling of safety, gave them also much delight—a difficulty overcome with a consciousness of a felicitous effort always prompts to the undertaking of a new one.

The second advantage was that children well versed in those illustrative elementary exercises afterwards displayed great skill in mental arithmetic. Without repairing to their slate or paper, without making any memorandum of figures, they not only performed operations with large numbers, but they arranged and solved questions which at first might have appeared involved, even had the assistance of memoranda or working out on paper been allowed.

Of the numerous travellers of your nation who did me the honor to visit my establishment, there was none, however little he might be disposed or qualified to enter into a consideration of the whole of my plan, who did not express his astonishment at the perfect ease and the quickness with which arithmetical problems, such as the visitors used to propose, were solved. I do not mention this and I did not feel then any peculiar satisfaction on account of the display with which it was connected, through the acknowledgment of strangers can by no means be indifferent to one who wishes to see his plan judged of by its results. But the reason why I felt much interested and gratified by the impression which that department of the school invariably produced was that it singularly confirmed the fitness and utility of our elementary course. It went a great way at least with me to make me hold fast the principle that the infant mind should be acted

upon by illustrations taken from reality, not by rules taken from abstraction; that we ought to teach by *things* more than by *words*.

In the exercises concerning the elements of form my friends have most successfully revived and extended what the ancients called the *analytical method*—the mode of eliciting facts by problems, instead of stating them in theories; of elucidating the origin of them, instead of merely commenting on their existence; of leading the mind to invent, instead of resting satisfied with the inventions of others. So truly beneficial, so stimulating is that employment to the mind, that we have learned fully to appreciate the principle of Plato that whoever wished to apply with success to metaphysics ought to prepare himself by the study of geometry. It is not the acquaintance with certain qualities or proportions, of certain forms and figures (though, for many purposes, this is applicable in practical life, and conducive to the advancement of science), but it is the precision of reasoning, and the ingenuity of invention, which, springing as it does from a familiarity with those exercises, qualifies the intellect for exertion of every kind.

In exercises of number and form less abstraction is at first required than in similar ones in language. But I would insist on the necessity of a careful instruction in the maternal language. Of foreign tongues or

of the dead languages I think that they ought to be studied by all means by those to whom a knowledge of them may become useful, or who are so circumstanced that they may indulge a predilection for them if their taste or habits lead that way. But I know not of one single exception that I would make of the principle that as early as possible a child should be led to contract an intimate acquaintance with and make himself perfectly master of his native tongue.

Charles the Fifth used to say that as many languages as a man possessed, so often was he man. How far this may be true I will not inquire: but thus much I know to be a fact, that the mind is deprived of its first instrument or organ, as it were; that its functions are interrupted and its ideas confused, when there is a want of perfect acquaintance and mastery of at least *one language*. The friends of oppression, of darkness, of prejudice, cannot do better, nor have they at any time neglected the point, than to stifle the power and facility of free, manly, and well-practised speaking; nor can the friends of light and liberty do better, and it were desirable that they were more assiduous in the cause, than to procure to every one, to the poorest as well as to the richest, a facility if not of elegance at least of frankness and energy of speech—a facility which would enable them to collect and clear up their

vague ideas, to embody those which are distinct, and which would awaken a thousand new ones.*

* It had been the intention of the editor to subjoin a concise account of those exercises which Pestalozzi has but alluded to in the last Letters. He is aware that the statements made in them will not in any way be sufficient for readers wholly unacquainted with the subject, to form an adequate idea of what constitutes a very prominent feature in the Pestalozzian system. The editor, however, finding that in order to do justice to the subject he would be obliged to enter into a greater number of details than the plan and size of the present publication would conveniently admit, begs to refer once more to a little work which he has frequently alluded to as by far the most useful and distinguished performance, in English, connected with Pestalozzi's views. The "Hints to Parents" contain the most excellent manual of exercises on number, form, and language, drawn up, as they profess to be, "in Pestalozzi's spirit". The merit of that little work and the practical applicability of the plan which it details have met with so general acknowledgment on the part of those who have followed that plan in the education of their own children that the editor is confident that all those who feel disposed to give their attention to the subject will find the greatest satisfaction in perusing and in availing themselves of the "Hints to Parents".

LETTER XXXII

APRIL 25, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Need I point out to you the motive from which I have said thus much on the early attention to be paid to physical and intellectual education? Need I remind you, that I consider these branches merely as leading to a higher aim,—to qualify the human being for the free and full use of all the faculties implanted by the Creator,—and to direct all these faculties towards the perfection of the whole being of man, that he may be enabled to act in his peculiar station as an instrument of that all-wise and almighty Power that has called him into life? This is the view which Education should lead an individual to take of his relation to his Maker,—a view which will at once give him humility to acknowledge the imperfection of his attempts and the weakness of his power—and inspire him with the courage of an unshaken confidence in the source of all that is good and true.

In relation to society, man should be qualified by education to be a useful member of it. In order to be

truly useful, it is necessary that he should be truly *independent*. Whether that independence may arise from his circumstances, or whether it be acquired by the honorable use of his talents, or whether it be owing to more laborious exertion and frugal habits, it is clear that true independence must rise and fall with the dignity of his moral character, rather than with affluent circumstances or intellectual superiority or indefatigable exertion. A state of bondage or of self-merited poverty is not more degrading than a state of dependence on considerations which betray littleness of mind, or want of moral energy or of honorable feeling. An individual whose actions bear the stamp of independence of mind cannot but be a useful as well as an esteemed member of society. He fills up a certain place in society, belonging to himself and no other, because he has obtained it by merit and secured it by character. His talents, his time, his opportunities, and his influence are all given to a certain end. And even in the humbler walks of life, it has always been acknowledged that there were individuals who by the intelligent, the frank, the honorable character of their demeanor, and by the meritorious tendency of their exertions, deserved to be mentioned together with those whose names were illustrated by the halo of noble birth, and by the still brighter glory of genius or merit. That such instances are but exceptions, and

that these exceptions are so few, is owing to the system of education which generally prevails, and which is little calculated to promote independence of character.

Considering man as an individual, education should contribute toward giving him *happiness*. The feeling of happiness does not arise from exterior circumstances; it is a state of the mind, a consciousness of harmony both with the inward and the outward world: it assigns their due limits to the desires, and it proposes the highest aim to the faculties of man. For happy is he who can bring his desires within the measure of his means, and who can resign every individual and selfish wish without giving up his content and repose,—whose feeling of general satisfaction is not dependent on individual gratification. And happy again is he who, whenever self is out of the question and the higher perfection of his better nature or the best interests of his race are at stake,—happy is he who then knows of no limits to his efforts, and who can bring them to keep pace with his most sanguine hopes! The sphere of happiness is unbounded; it is extending as the views are enlarged; it is elevated as the feelings of the heart are raised; it “grows with their growth, and strengthens with their strength.”

In order to give the character described here to the actions and of the life of an individual, I consider it as

necessary that all the faculties implanted in human nature should be properly developed. It is not that *virtuosity* ought to be attained in any direction, or that a degree of excellence ought to be anxiously aspired to which is the exclusive privilege of pre-eminent talent. But there is a degree of development of all the faculties which is far from the refinement of any; and of such a course the great advantage will be to prepare the mind for a more especial application to any line of studies congenial to its inclination, or connected with certain pursuits.*

With regard to the claim which every human being has to a judicious development of his faculties by those to whom the care of his infancy is confided, a claim of which the universality does not seem to be sufficiently acknowledged,—allow me to make use of an illustration which was on one occasion proposed by one of my friends. Whenever we find a human being in a state

* What Locke has said more generally of education is strictly applicable to a course of exercises such as have been alluded to in the foregoing pages: “The business of education, in respect of knowledge, is not to perfect the learner in all or any one of the sciences; but to give his mind that disposition, and those habits, that may enable him to attain any part of knowledge he shall stand in need of in the future course of his life.”

of suffering, and near to the awful moment which is for ever to close the scene of his pains and his enjoyments in this world, we feel ourselves moved by a sympathy which reminds us that however low his earthly condition, here too there is one of our race, subject to the same sensations of alternate joy and grief,—born with the same faculties, with the same destination, with the same hopes for a life of immortality. And as we give ourselves up to that idea, we would fain if we could alleviate his sufferings and shed a ray of light on the darkness of his parting moments. This is a feeling which will come home to the heart of every one,—even to the young and the thoughtless, and to those little used to the sight of woe. Why then, we would ask, do we look with a careless indifference on those who enter life? Why do we feel so little interest in the feelings and in the condition of those who enter upon that varied scene, of which, if we would but stop to reflect, we might contribute to enhance the enjoyments, and to diminish the sum of suffering, of discontent and wretchedness? And that education might do that, is the conviction of all those who are competent to speak from experience. That it *ought* to do as much is the persuasion, and that it *may some time* accomplish it is the constant endeavor of all those who are truly interested in the welfare of mankind.

LETTER XXXIII

MAY 1, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

In my last letter I described the end of education to be to render man conscientiously active in the service of his Maker; to render him useful by rendering him independent with relation to society; and, as an individual, to render him happy within himself.

To this end I conceive that the formation of the intellect, the attainment of useful knowledge, and the development of all the faculties may be made instrumental. But though they will be found highly serviceable as furnishing the means, they will not supply the spring of action. It would be preposterous, no doubt, to provide for the facilities of execution, without exciting the motives of a certain plan or line of conduct.

Of this fault, the process which frequently goes by the name of education and which might more appropriately be denominated a mechanical training, is often guilty. The common motive by which such a system acts on those whose indolence it has conquered is *Fear*; the very highest to which it can aspire in those whose sensibility is excited is *Ambition*.

It is obvious that such a system can calculate only on the lower selfishness of man. To that least amiable or estimable part of the human character it is, and always has been, indebted for its best success. Upon the better feelings of man it turns a deaf ear.

How is it then that motives leading to a course of action which is looked upon as mean and despicable or at best as doubtful, when it occurs in life, are thought honorable in education? Why should that bias be given to the mind in a school which to gain the respect or the affection of others an individual must first of all strive to unlearn; a bias to which every candid mind is a stranger?

I do not wish to speak harshly of ambition or to reject it altogether as a motive. There is, to be sure, a noble ambition—dignified by its object, and distinguished by a deep and transcendent interest in that object. But if we consider the sort of ambition commonly proposed to the school-boy—if we analyze “what stuff ’t is made of,—whereof it is born,” we shall find that it has nothing to do with the interest taken in the object of study; that such an interest frequently does not exist; and that, owing to its being blended with that vilest and meanest of motives, with *fear*, it is by no means raised by the wish to give pleasure to those who propose it; for a teacher who proceeds on a system in which fear and ambition are the principal agents

must give up his claim to the esteem or the affection of his pupils.

Motives like fear or inordinate ambition may stimulate to exertion, intellectual or physical, but they cannot warm the heart. There is not in them that life which makes the heart of youth to heave with the delight of knowledge—with the honest consciousness of talent—with the honorable wish for distinction—with the kindly glow of genuine feeling. Such motives are inadequate in their source and inefficient in their application; for they are nothing to the heart, and “out of the heart are the issues of life.”

On these grounds it is that in moral as well as intellectual education I have urged the supreme character of the motive of sympathy as the one that should early and indeed principally be employed in the management of children. On these grounds I have repeatedly urged the propriety of attending to that feeling which I have no hesitation in declaring to be the first feeling of an higher nature that is alive in the child—the feeling in the infant of love and confidence in the mother. Upon this feeling I wish to ground the first foundation—and on a feeling analogous to it and springing from it I wish to guide the future steps of education.

That in the infant that feeling exists there can be no doubt. We have for it the testimony of those who

are most competent to judge, because best enabled to sympathize with it,—the mothers.

To the mothers, therefore, I would again and again address the request to let themselves be governed by their maternal feelings, enlightened by thought, in guiding those rising impressons, in developing that tender germ in the infant's heart. They will find that at first it is yet involved in the animal nature of the infant; that it is an innate feeling, strong, because not yet under the control of reason, and filling the whole mind because not yet opposed by the impulse of conflicting passions. That feeling, let them believe, has been implanted by the Creator. But together with it there exists in the infant that instinctive impulse of its animal nature which is first made subservient to self-preservation and directed towards the satisfaction of natural and necessary wants; which is next bent on gratification, and unless it be checked in time, runs out into a thousand imaginary and artificial wants, hurrying us from enjoyment to enjoyment, and ending in consummate selfishness.

To control and to break this selfish impulse, the best, the only course is for the mother to strengthen daily that better impulse which so soon gives her the pledge by the first smile on the lips, the first glance of affection in the eye of the infant, that though the powers of the intellect are yet slumbering, she may

soon speak a language intelligible to the *heart*. She will be enabled by affection and by firmness to bring her child to give up those cravings which render it so unamiable, and to give them up for her, the mother's sake. By what means she can make herself understood—how she can supply the want of words and of precepts—I shall not undertake to answer for her: but let a mother answer whether, conscious as she is of her own love for her child, a love enhanced by reflection, she will not without either words or precepts be able to find the way to the heart and the affection of her infant.

But if the mother has succeeded in this, let her not fancy that she has done every thing. The time will come when the hitherto speechless emotions of the infant will find a language—when his eye will wander from the mother to other individuals within the sphere that surrounds him—and when that sphere itself will be extended. His affections must then no longer rest concentrated in one object, and that object though the dearest and kindest of mortals yet a mortal, and liable to those imperfections which “our flesh is heir to.” The affections of the child are claimed by higher objects,—and indeed by the highest.

Maternal love is the first agent in education; but maternal love though the purest of human feelings is human; and salvation is not of the power of man but

of the power of God. Let not the mother fancy that she of her own power and with her best intentions can raise the child's heart and mind beyond the sphere of earthly and perishable things. It is not for her to presume that her instructions or her example will benefit the child, unless they be calculated to lead the child to that faith and to that love from which alone salvation springs.

The love and confidence of the infant in the mother is but the adumbration of a purer,—of the purest and highest feeling which can take up its abode in a mortal breast—of a feeling of love and faith, now no more confined to an individual—now no more mixed with “ baser matter ”,—but rising superior to all other emotions, and *elevating* man by teaching him *humility*,—the feeling of love and faith in his Creator and his Redeemer.

In this spirit let education be considered in all its stages; let the physical faculties be developed, but without forgetting that they form the lower series of human nature; let the intellect be enlightened, but let it be remembered that the first science which thought and knowledge should teach is modesty and moderation; let the discipline be regulated and the heart be formed, not by coercion but by sympathy,—not by precept but by practice; and above all let it be prepared for that influence from above which alone can restore the image of God in man.

LETTER XXXIV.

MAY 12, 1819.

MY DEAR GREAVES,

Before I conclude, I wish to say a few words more—but on a subject of the most vital importance. *A few words* will suffice for those with whom we can sympathize, and others have seldom if ever been brought to agree by the most elaborate discussion.

I wish that no Christian mother may lay down this volume without asking herself seriously: “Is the course and are the measures recommended in these letters in unison with principles truly Christian? Are they calculated merely to promote intellectual attainments or to produce an appearance of self-made and self-styled morality? or are they such as deserve the names of the first and preparatory steps to *Christian Education?*”

Let her answer this question to herself, to the best of her knowledge and her feelings, and upon the result let it depend whether she will adopt them, with such modifications as experience or circumstances will suggest, in the education of her children. If her answer

be in the negative; if her heart should give her warning, and matured reflection confirm it, that these principles are *not Christian*, then let them be rejected, and be mentioned no more.

In the meantime allow me to subjoin a few remarks on the leading principles of Christianity, on that distinguishing characteristic which rendered it “*unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness*”; but to all those who believe it “*a power of God unto salvation*”, and which will eventually make it to “*cover the earth as the waters cover the deep.*” They are the remarks of an attentive observer, but of one who would fain let his heart speak when his intellect might fail of guiding him safely or his acquired knowledge of bearing him out. I hope that they will satisfy among all denominations of Christians those who hold the Scriptures higher than any human comment; the word of God higher than any human authority; and who would rather have its *spirit* live in the heart and be visibly manifested in all the actions of outward life, than see the *letter* of any particular tenets maintained with severity and inculcated with violence.

The highest aim of the nations of the ancient world was national power and greatness; their religions could not give them a higher principle than one of selfishness more or less refined.

There was, however, one exception which formed

the most striking contrast to it—the Mosaic dispensation. This religion urged strongly the weakness of the creature, and the infinite power of the Almighty; the strictness of the law, and the incapability of man to fulfil it; the trespassing of the guilty, and the sanctity of the judge. Though it may appear at first a religion only of the law and of terror and of outward expiations, yet it was a religion also of faith. There were those “*of whom the world was not worthy*” whose eyes were opened; who were inspired by the Spirit that “*searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God;*” who saw deeper than “*the types and shadows of the ceremonial law*”,—whose faith was strong enough to offer up with the patriarch the sum of their earthly hopes to the divine will and to speak with the Psalmist, “*Lord, though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.*”

In the Christian dispensation, this principle of faith was preserved, as “*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*”. But it was intimately united with the active principle of love.

The Christian doctrine, distant alike from encouraging the self-sufficiency of the Heathen world and from holding out the terrors of the Mosaic law, taught man to look up to his Maker, not as to his Judge only but also as to his Redeemer. The dreams of supreme power by which one nation courted the absolute sway of the world had vanished away; the monuments of

their splendor fell into ruins together with the altars of their Gods; the high purposes, too, for which Providence had singled out from among the rest the humbler tribes of one country were accomplished, and Sion was no more the dwelling of the Most High nor the point of union of all the faithful; and Christianity was hailed by all those whose love was warm, and whose faith was strong enough to trust and to delight in its ultimate destination as the religion of mankind. As such, Christianity has destroyed those barriers by which man had presumed to shut out his brother from the access to truth; it has invited all, the high and the low, to meet on one ground, a ground infinitely above the distinctions of rank or wealth or knowledge; and their meeting on that ground was not so much to be considered as a concession on the one side, or as a vindication of right on the other, but rather as the unanimous desire to embrace the free gift of God proffered to all.

In this spirit, without disturbing their foundations Christianity has raised the character of the social institutions; has animated individuals to stand forward and with the boldness of truth but with the meekness of love to plead the cause of their brothers; has urged some to bear her light, to unfold her standard in distant regions, and others to proclaim among those invested with power her unequivocal claims, and thus

to propose that great work in the accomplishment of which subsequent ages may rejoice, and see—

“ At the voice of the Gospel of Peace,
The sorrows of Africa cease :
And the Slave and his Master devoutly unite
To walk in *her* freedom, and dwell in *her* light.”

For the ultimate destination of Christianity, such as it is revealed in the sacred volume and manifested in the page of history, I cannot find a more appropriate expression than to say that its object is to accomplish the education of mankind. Destined to elevate all, it would soothe the sorrows of each; and however different the abilities, and the circumstances, all are to partake of “ *that one and the self same spirit dividing to every man severally as he will.*”

If we look upon Christianity, as we are indeed fully justified in doing, as the scheme adopted by Infinite Wisdom to consummate the great end of the education of mankind, we may from the contemplation of the means employed deduce an unerring standard for all efforts of our own. We may, at the same time, be confirmed in the conviction that Christianity is not a privilege confined to those only who by any peculiar talents or knowledge or exertions might appear better qualified to receive it than others, but that it is a gift freely tendered to all though deserved by none;—adapted not to one condition of life but to the fallen state of human nature—to that struggle of the flesh

against the spirit—that strange mixture of contradictions—of conceited knowledge and of aversion to light—when man presumes in puny strength to work out his own salvation; when with his eye intent, and his heart entranced by the charm of perishable things, he yet imagines to fathom the depths of truth and to climb the bright summit of happiness,—or when, in more gloomy vision, his affections centred all in self, he is led to proclaim truth a phantom and love an empty sound—when by turns he flies from the turmoil of life to a world of dreams, and from the endless maze of solitary speculation, to the dissipations of life—when “*he says, peace—peace—where there is no peace!*”

Among the passages of the sacred volume which throw most light on the state of mind which is best fitted for the reception of Christian truth, I have always considered as one of the most illustrative these words of the Savior—“*Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.*” What can there be in “a little child” deserving to be compared with a state of readiness for the Christian faith? It cannot be an effort of morality or an attempt at high perfection; for the infant is incapable of any. It cannot be any degree of knowledge or intellectual refinement; for the infant is a stranger to both. What then can it be except that feeling of love and confidence of which the mother is for a time the

first and only object? That feeling is analogous in its nature and agency to the state of mind described by the name of faith. It does not rest on a conviction of the understanding, but it is more convincing than any syllogism could have been. Not being founded on it it cannot be injured by reasoning; it has to do with the heart only. It is prior to the development of all other faculties:—if we ask for its origin, we can only say that it is instinctive;—or if we mean to resolve an unmeaning expression into the truth, it is a gift of Him who has called into life all the hosts of the creation—in whom “ *we live and move, and have our being.* ”

Analogous to that emotion, like it imparted by the Giver of all that is good, is the state of mind of those who “ *believe to the saving of the soul.* ” Though infinitely elevated above it, it yet partakes in like manner of the nature of a feeling as well as a conviction; arising from both, it is invested with that energy which brings forth fruits of love; it proves that true faith is kindred in its nature to active love, and that “ *he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.* ”

That emotion in the infant mind, that adumbration of faith and of love, can be dearer to none than to a Christian mother. Let her be convinced that there is only one way for her to manifest her maternal affection—and that way is to watch over the gift of God to her child—to be thankful to the Giver, and, hoping that

from Him may come the increase, to do all in her power to unfold the germ; to be mild and firm and persevering in the task; to look to her own heart for a motive, and to heaven for the blessing.

Happy the mother who thus leads her children to faith, and from faith to love, and from love to happiness. And thrice happy she who has before her eyes in her task the recollection of one who in genuine and unassuming piety watched over the dream of her infant years—an example that, stronger than any precept, strong as the voice of maternal love in her own breast, calls upon her “to remember;—to resemble;—to persevere !”

John Henry Pestalozzi.

1. *Pestalozzi; his Aim and Work.* By BARON DE GUIMPS. Translated by Margaret Cuthbertson Crombie. 12mo, pp. 336. Manilla 50 cts.; Cloth \$1.50.

Among the best books that could be added to the teacher's library.—*The Chautauquan.*

It is sufficient to say that the book affords the fullest material for a knowledge of the life of the great educational reformer.—*Literary World.*

The most satisfactory biography of Pestalozzi accessible to English readers.—*Wisconsin Journal of Education.*

2, *How Gertrude Teaches her Children*; an attempt to help mothers to

teach their own children. By J. H. PESTALOZZI. Cloth, 12mo, pp. 308. \$1.50.

The greatest of Pestalozzi's educational works is now for the first time published in English translation.

Pestalozzi's *Leonard and Gertrude* has appeared in several editions, and is considered an essential part of every teacher's library. But there is very little in it pertaining to teaching. It is mostly a story of German peasant life, interesting because it made Pestalozzi famous. But for some reason the sequel, *How Gertrude Teaches her Children*, has been neglected. A translation of some parts of it appeared in Biber's "Life of Pestalozzi" and some of it appeared in Barnard's *American Journal of Education*. But a complete translation now appears for the first time, and for the first time makes English readers thoroughly familiar with Pestalozzi's ideas of elementary instruction. The volume contains also "The Method; a Report by Pestalozzi to the Society of the Friends of Education, Burgdorf"; and an introduction of 51 pages by Ebenezer Cooke, and abundant notes.

Dr. G. Stanley Hall says: "Modern education almost begins with Pestalozzi's tale, 'How Gertrude Teaches her Children'. It describes the regeneration of a dismal hamlet by a good teacher as the principle by which nations are made great. Fichte lit his torch here and made Germany the strongest state since ancient Rome by becoming the educational state of the world, and France has now imitated her example."

3. *Portrait of Pestalozzi*, bust life-size, on paper 22 by 28 inches, suitable for framing. 25 cts.

4. *Object Lessons; or Words and Things.* By T. G. ROOPER. Leatherette, 16mo. pp. 56. 50 cts.

5. *The Pestalozzian Series of Arithmetics.* Based upon Pestalozzi's method of Teaching Elementary Number. By JAMES H. HOOSE. Boards, 16mo, *First Year, Pupil's Edition*, pp. 156, 35 cts. *Teacher's Edition*, pp. 217. 50 cts. *Second Year, Pupil's Edition*, 50 cts.

C. W. BARDEEN, Publisher, Syracuse, N. Y.

The Pestalozzian Arithmetics.

1. *Teachers' Manual and First-Year Text-Book* of Primary Arithmetic. Based upon Pestalozzi's method of teaching Elementary Number. By JAMES H. HOOSE, Ph.D. Boards, pp. 217, 50 cts.

2. *First-Year Text-Book* of Primary Arithmetic. Boards, 16mo, pp. 135, 35 cts.

3. *Second-Year Text-Book* of Primary Arithmetic. Boards, 16mo, pp. 236, 50 cts.

This is a practical exposition of the *Pestalozzian Method*, and has met with great success not only in the Cortland Normal School, where it was first developed, but in many other leading schools, as in Gloversville, Babylon, etc. It is diametrically opposed to the Grubé Method, and good teachers should be familiar with both, that they may choose intelligently between them.

The author states the principles of this system as follows:

"The Pestalozzian system of Number proceeds on the theory and practice of introducing to the pupil a minimum variety of objects, and of giving to him a maximum amount of practice upon a few forms. The forms are those which constitute mathematics; they are as general as mathematics are general; learned once, always useful.

"The system recognizes the difference between processes in arithmetic, and the reasoning required in so-called practical examples. The mastery of a process (addition, multiplication or subtraction) is a language, is an expertness, is a facility in procedure: it is acquired by practice, repetition; it is habit, which is power acting in a particular form. Practical examples introduce relations which are discovered by the logical aptitudes of mind. The child masters easily a form of operation, a process; this mastery gives the pupil ambition; this ambition to test in a greater degree his powers, constitutes his interest in his work; his interest stimulates his courage. The pupil is trained in this manner in his moral character. The very uniformities in the system are sources of strength to the child, the same as the uniformities of action in learning the keyboard of the piano are elements of mastery in learning to play the instrument."

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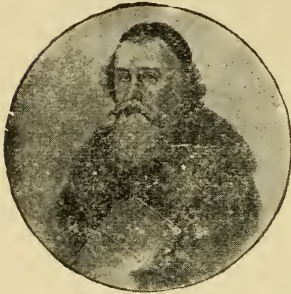
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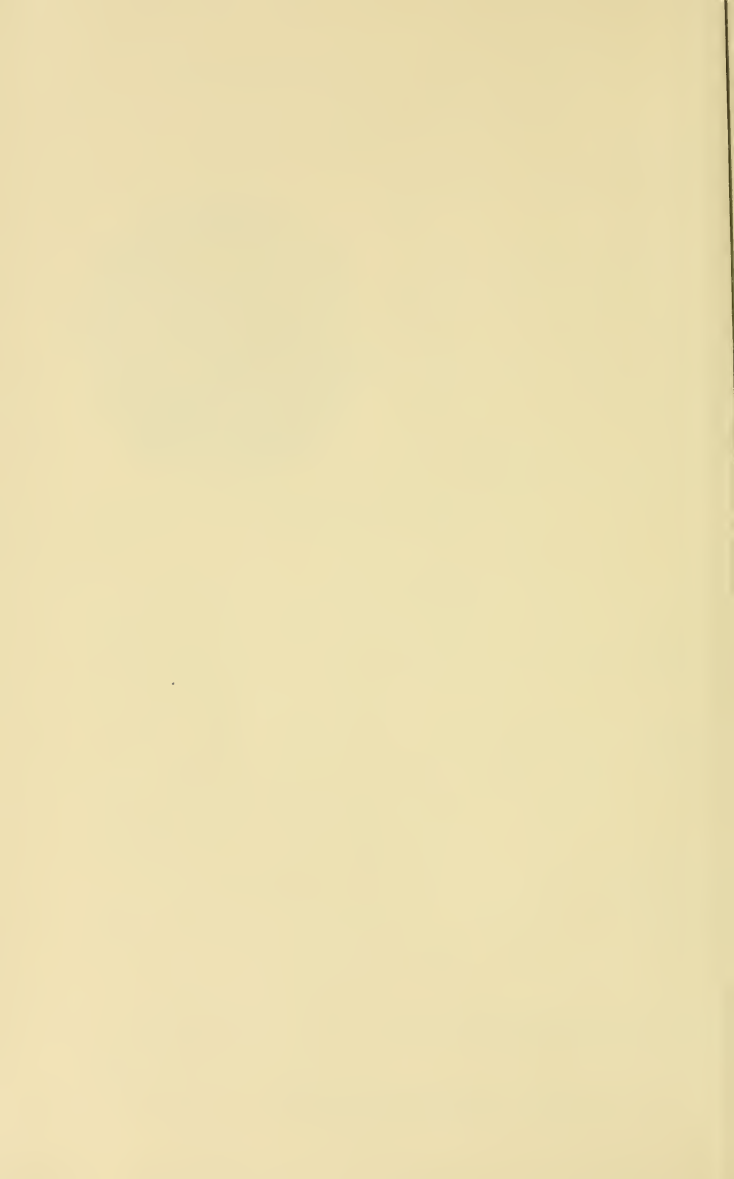
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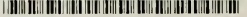
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